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THE "PHILOSOPHE"

IN THE FRENCH DRAMA OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

A DISSERTATION

PRESENTED TO THE

FACULTY OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

IRA O. WADE

PRINCETON

1926

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INTRODUCTION

This work is the outgrowth of a desire to determine the definition of the word "philosophe" as used in the eighteenth century. That there was something indefinite, even hazy, about the term, impressed me during a study of Rousseau's various quarrels, where one of the knottiest questions is whether Rousseau was at that time a "philosophe." In his letters, and even more so in the *Confessions*, there were noted three successive attitudes on his part: he seemed at first attracted by the term, then bewildered, and finally disgusted; and I detected indications of similar reactions among other eighteenth-century writers. Accordingly, I asked myself the same question which Mengin-Fondragon[1] had asked in 1819: What is a "philosophe"?

In an effort to answer this question, I began at random a search for definitions, and was surprised to find the number of times an attempt had been made to define the word. Periodicals, letters, poems, novels, pamphlets, plays, dictionaries, encyclopedias furnished superabundant material. The "philosophes," their opponents, and those who regarded the struggle between the two factions with indifference sought to give the term a definition. These definitions showed great

1. Quérard, *La France littéraire.*

diversity. The one given in the *Encyclopédie* (1765)[1] is far different from that given in the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* (1771),[2] and these two definitions vary considerably from that of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* (1786).[3] Not only was there diversity of opinion among the various groups, there was diversity of opinion among individuals more or less closely united into one group. Montesquieu,[4] Voltaire,[5] Madame du Deffant,[6] and Marmontel[7] differ in their definition of the term, sometimes fundamentally. Thus Voltaire understood the word as "philosophe pratique," while Madame du Deffant thought it was synonymous with "philosophe soi-disant": two views for which no common denominator exists.

It soon became manifest that the eighteenth-century material bearing on the "philosophe" was overwhelmingly abundant and diversified. No less than fifty novels were found which contained the term in the title, such, for example, as *Le Philosophe amoureux* of D'Argens or *Le Philosophe*

1. "Le philosophe est donc un honnête homme qui agit en tout par raison, et qui joint à un esprit de réflexion et de justesse les mœurs et les qualités sociables."

2. "Dans le monde, on décore aussi du nom de philosophe ces prétendus esprits forts, qui plus par air, et par une espèce de libertinage d'esprit, que par dépravation de mœurs, se mettent au-dessus des devoirs et des obligations de la vie civile et chrétienne; et qui, affranchis de tout ce qu'ils appellent préjugés de l'éducation en matière de religion, se mocquent des pauvres humains, assez faibles pour respecter des lois établies, et assez imbéciles pour n'oser secouer le joug d'une très ancienne superstition."

3. "On appelle aussi philosophe, un homme sage, qui mène une vie tranquille et retirée, hors de l'embarras des affaires."

4. *Lettres persanes*, CXLV: "Un philosophe a un mépris souverain pour un homme qui a la tête chargée de faits; et il est à son tour regardé comme un visionnaire par celui qui a une bonne mémoire."

5. Voltaire to the Marquise du Deffant, June 18, 1770: "Je la [Madame Geoffrin] déclare philosophe. J'entends surtout, par ce mot, philosophe pratique."

6. *Correspondance de Madame Du Deffant*, Vol. IV, p. 294. Letter to Voltaire, January 5, 1769: "Vos philosophes, ou plutôt soi-disant philosophes..."

7. *Mémoires*, Book VII, p. 446: "Il y avait à l'Académie quatre hommes désignés sous le nom de philosophe, étiquette odieuse dans ce temps-là."

parvenu of Lesuire. And poems similarly designated, such as *Le Philosophe des Alpes* of La Harpe or *Le Philosophe champêtre* of Reyrac, seemed innumerable. Scarcely a number of a periodical like Fréron's *Année littéraire* appeared without contributing a new definition of the word. As it was impracticable to attempt to cover the whole field, I decided to restrict the present study to the drama, for it is in the mirror of the contemporary stage that we might expect that the character of the "philosophe" would be most clearly reflected.

I have identified one hundred and eighty-nine eighteenth-century plays containing the "philosophe" as a character.[1] An examination of a few of them discloses a diversity in the presentation of the "philosophe" on the stage corresponding to the diversity of the definitions of the "philosophe" in actual life. A fuller examination of the plays indicates that, with the exception of one set reserved for separate consideration, they fall into the following groups according to the type of "philosophe" they present:

1) The ancient "philosophe." — Plays belonging to this group can be distinguished by the name of some ancient philosopher given in the title; for example, *Diogène à Ispahan*, by Dubourg. The plays of this group may also be divided among the other groups, according to the treatment accorded the ancient philosopher.

2) The "philosophe amoureux." — In the plays of this group, the "philosophe" is invariably treated as a shy scholar, prejudiced against women. However, before the end of the play, he usually succumbs to the charms of some fair lady; *e. g.*, *L'Homme singulier*, by Destouches.

3) The "philosophe champêtre." — The "philosophe" in this group of plays is regarded as a retired gentleman, who seeks to do good to his small community. This group is closely allied to the

1. The easiest to locate are naturally those which contain in the title the words "philosophe," "philosophie," or "philosophique"; and for that group I believe that my material will be found fairly complete. Concerning those plays in which the title gives no indication of a "philosophe," the list, I hope, is sufficiently representative to furnish a trustworthy indication of the acceptations of the term by the eighteenth century dramatists.

"philosophe amoureux" group mentioned above, for the retired "philosophe" usually falls in love with some lady; *e. g.*, *Le Philosophe champêtre*, anonymous.

4) The practical "philosophe." — The hero of this group of plays is an individual without scholastic or philosophical training. He is the practical man who, in the face of adversity, displays a courage and a fortitude worthy of the ancient philosophers; *e. g.*, *Le Philosophe sans le savoir*, by Sedaine.

5) The idealized "philosophe." — The "philosophe" in each play of this group is chosen among the authors of the century and idealized in some little event of his life; *e. g.*, *Helvétius à Voré*, by Ladoucette.

In all of these groups, the leading character is called a "philosophe." Nevertheless, it is evident, from the very beginning, that this character differs fundamentally from an avowed "philosophe" of 1760, such as Voltaire, Diderot, or Grimm. In fact, if there should be made a list of the eighteenth-century individuals whom we now style "philosophes," not one of them could be identified with the personage in any of the five preceding groups. Not that those whose names would occur in the list do not sometimes display the characteristic presented, as the outstanding feature of the "philosophe," by one or another group of the plays. For instance, Voltaire's beneficence at Ferney, or Helvétius' retirement at Voré might well entitle them to a place in Group 3. But, whereas beneficence and retirement are the fundamental characteristics for all "philosophes" in Group 3, they are by no means the distinguishing traits of Voltaire, "philosophe," or of Helvétius, "philosophe." Similarly, the other groups sometimes give a characteristic which must be present in a "philosophe" such as Voltaire, Diderot or Raynal. Hence these five groups of plays do not present the general aspects of the "philosophe" as we know him today; they portray only unessential attributes of the character, and, for this reason, they will not be treated in the present discussion. They are valuable, however, to the student who would trace accurately the conception of the word, for they prove conclusively the confusion which was present in its evolution.

Among the one hundred and eighty-nine plays there is an additional group consisting of plays whose authors attempted to present the "philosophe" as he was known in life. It is to this group that the present study will be limited.[1]

1. In the absence of an English equivalent, the term "philosophe" has been retained. It will be understood to refer to those individuals of the eighteenth century who either assumed, or were given, the title, irrespective of whether they can veritably be considered philosophers. I have assumed in the course of the discussion that any member of the Encyclopedic Party could be termed a Philosophe. It has not been assumed, however, that the term Philosophe was necessarily restricted to a member of the Encyclopedic Party.

CHAPTER I

THE PLAYS AND THEIR SETTING

Although each play in the five groups which we have briefly outlined in the introduction has among the personages at least one character who is called a Philosophe, this character, we have seen, does not present the general aspects of such individuals of the philosophic movement as Voltaire, Helvétius and Diderot. At best, he is a comic,[1] or, in the case of the person presented as the practical philosopher, a didactic character[2] to whom has been assigned a vacillating title Philosophe. The same title, however, was applicable to Voltaire, Helvétius, or Diderot. Hence, in the eighteenth century, there were at least two uses to which the term could be put. It could be applied to amiable or eccentric individuals who possessed peculiarities not necessarily inherent in a Philosophe, or it could refer to specific historical individuals, or their disciples, still known to us by that title.

The discrepancy between the two uses of the term is so great that the impression is gathered that we are dealing here with two distinct individuals, either unrelated, or related very distantly. The reason for the impression is obvious. Voltaire, Helvétius, and Diderot are real Philosophes, intimately connected with the philosophic movement in which they took a part. The plays in the five groups doubtless owe their popularity, even their origin, to the far-reaching effects of the encyclopedic movement. But with that movement they seem to have no intimate connection. They stand apart, in that they neither advanced nor retarded its progress, and serve only to bear witness to its wide-spread tendencies, so that

1. Groups 1, 2, and 3.
2. Groups 4 and 6.

the character whom they present reflects inadequately the outstanding figures.

However, among the one hundred and eighty-nine plays, there remain a certain number which are intimately connected with the growth of the Encyclopedic Party, and which, therefore, should present the broader aspects of such Philosophes as Voltaire, Helvétius, and Diderot. A list of these plays, with their dates and authors, follows:

Du Cerceau, *Le Philosophe à la mode*	1720
Buffier, C., *Damocle ou le Roi philosophe*	1728
Duvaure, *Le faux Savant*	1728
Davesnes, *Arlequin apprentif philosophe*	1731
Anonymous: *Les Philosophes*	1742
Cahusac, *Zoroastre*	1749
Mainvilliers, *Les huit Philosophes aventuriers de ce siècle*	1752
Mainvilliers, *Les huit Philosophes errans de ce siècle*	1754
Palissot, C., *Le Cercle, ou les Originaux*	1755
Voltaire, *Socrate*	1759
Anonymous: *Le Sage, ou le Philosophe du jour*	1760
Cailleau, A., *Les Originaux ou les Fourbes punis*	1760
Martin, *Le Philosophe soi-disant*	1760
Palissot, C., *Les Philosophes*	1760
Poinsinet, A., *Le petit Philosophe*	1760
Voltaire, *L'Ecossaise*	1760
Poinsinet de Sivry, *Les Philosophes de bois*	1760
Cailleau, A., *Les Philosophes manqués*	1761
Diderot, D., *Le Père de famille*	1761
Bernouilly, L., *Le Philosophe soi-disant*	1762
Desfontaines, F., *Le prétendu Philosophe*	1762
Chabannes, R., *La Manie des arts*	1763
Sauvigny, B., *La Mort de Socrate*	1763
La Volière, *Le Philosophe soi-disant*	1763
Linguet, *Socrate*	1764
Abancourt, W., *Le Philosophe soi-disant*	1764
Sticotti, *Le Sauvage hors de condition*	1764
Bernouilly, L., *Le Philosophe supposé*	1765
Lesbros de la Versane, *Le Philosophe soi-disant*	1766
Kinschott, A., *Le Philosophe soi-disant*	1767
Saurin, *L'Anglomane*	1772
Passow, *L'Amour philosophe*	1773

Duval, *La nouvelle Philosophie à vau l'eau*..... 1775
Palissot, C., *Les Courtisannes*..... 1775
Dorat, C., *Les Prôneurs*..... 1777
Rutlidge, C., *Le Bureau d'esprit*..... 1777
Passow, *Marianne*..... 1777
Du Buisson, *Le Philosophe imaginaire*..... 1780
Bièvre, *Le Séducteur*..... 1783
La Montagne, *La Physicienne*..... 1784
Anonymous: *Le Philosophe soi-disant*..... 1785
Anonymous: *La Philoso-manie*..... 1787
Anonymous: *Les Philosophes imaginaires*..... 1789
Anonymous: *Le Bourgeois philosophe*..... 1790
Craven, *Le Philosophe moderne*..... 1790
Castaing, *Le Philosophe soi-disant*..... 1791
La Montagne, *Papelard ou le Philosophe littéraire et politique* 1796
Desrois, *L'Anti-philosophe*..... 1800
Radonvilliers, *Le Valet philosophe*
Anonymous: *Arlequin philosophe épicurien*
Anonymous: *Les Philosophes modernes*

The fifty-one plays of this group differ fundamentally from those of the five preceding groups in that they are closely related to the philosophic movement. An examination, first by decades, then by single years, of the dates of these fifty-one plays furnishes evidence of this close relationship. From 1710-1720, there are no known plays belonging to this group; from 1720-1730, there are three; from 1730-1740, one; from 1740-1750, two; from 1750-1760, four; from 1760-1770, twenty; from 1770-1780, seven; from 1780-1790, six; from 1790-1800, five. Three of the plays are undated. During the first six decades of the century, then, there were ten plays; in the last four decades, thirty-eight. This concentration of plays in the last four decades of the century is in accord with Professor Lanson's division[1] of the century into two parts: the first part gradually increasing in philosophic activity, the second part violently active. The outstanding decade is the sixth with its twenty plays, double the number

1. Lanson, G., *Histoire de la littérature française* (1912), p. 630.

produced in the first sixty years of the century, and more than the total number for its last thirty years. This decade 1760-1770 was the period of bitterest struggle between the Philosophe and his opponents. The critical epoch, according to Belin,[1] was from 1758-1762. The period of crisis, if reflected on the stage, would naturally be noticed slightly later. Not until 1760 was there a noticeable increase in activity. During the course of that year, seven plays, or more than the total number appearing during the first half of the century, made their appearance. In the following year, 1761, there were two; in 1762, two; in 1763, three; in 1764, three. In these years 1760-1764, the total number was seventeen, almost treble the number produced during the entire first half of the century, and almost double that produced during the first sixty years.

Further evidence of the close relationship which existed between plays and movement can be obtained from an examination of the few existing prefaces of these works. For instance, in the anonymous *Philosophes* (1742), the author claims to have written the play for the amusement of real Philosophes, not for "ces autres fainéants de savants."[2] As for the *Philosophe à la mode*, the *Mercure* quotes from the program of the performance: "On entend par le nom de philosophe à la mode une espèce de sages prétendus dont toute la philosophie est composée d'un amour infini pour eux-mêmes, et d'une indifférence parfaite pour tout le reste du genre humain..." The most forceful statement, however, is made by Palissot:[3] "Une secte impérieuse, formée à l'ombre d'un ouvrage dont l'exécution pouvait illustrer le siècle, exerçait un despotisme rigoureux sur les sciences, les lettres, les arts et les mœurs. Armée du flambeau de la philosophie, elle avait porté l'incendie dans les esprits, au lieu d'y répandre la lumière;... elle prêchait le

1. Belin, J., *Le Mouvement philosophique de 1748 à 1789* (1913), p. 109.
2. Pp. 3 and 4.
3. *Lettre au public pour servir de préface à la pièce des Philosophes*, 1760.

Pyronnisme, l'indépendance; et dans le temps qu'elle détruisait toute autorité, elle usurpait une tyrannie universelle." In the same article, he justifies his satire as follows: "Il ne restait, pour abattre ce parti puissant, que de l'attaquer par le ridicule aux yeux du public assemblé: c'était ramener le théâtre à sa première institution; et sans doute il y a de la modération à n'employer que de pareilles armes contre de certains excès." The author of the *Nouvelle Philosophie à vau l'eau* likewise deplores the pernicious consequences of the works of the false Philosophes. Certain people read these works, adopt the principles therein expressed, broadcast the doctrines, and imagine that, by this process, they have become full-fledged Philosophes themselves. Other people, seized with horror, become so indignant that they attack true philosophy. And he concludes: " Je tâche, dans cet écrit, de désabuser les uns, et d'instruire les autres. Si je m'attache davantage à montrer la noirceur de la fausse philosophie; c'est qu'il est très difficile d'arracher une erreur qui fait tous les jours de nouveaux progrès, au lieu qu'il suffit que le vulgaire sache qu'il y a une vraie philosophie pour calmer ses alarmes."[1] In his preface to the first edition of *Le Bureau d'esprit*, Rutlidge characterizes his play as an act of "lèse-philosophie."[2] The Marquis de Bièvre states in his preface to *Le Séducteur*: "Je ne me justifierai point de ce qu'on a dit sur 'Le Valet philosophe'. Les valets marquis n'ont révolté personne et la société les a soufferts sur la scène avec beaucoup de philosophie; mais c'est surtout de l'acception moderne du mot penseur que j'ai jeté un ridicule sur ce titre par le nom même de Zéronès qui a été laquais, qui n'a point lu l'histoire, qui ne lit pas des vers, qui n'a rien écrit, qui ne sait l'orthographe, et qui cependant trouve à dîner parce qu'il a dit au public qu'il était philosophe. Ceux qui se reconnaîtront à ce portrait ne méritent pas assurément que je leur en fasse mes excuses."[3] Lamerlière in *Le Sage ou le Phi-*

1. Avertissement, p. 1.
2. Préface à la première édition, p. 4.
3. Préface, p. 5.

losophe du jour writes: "Le méchant et l'étourdi ne manqueront pas d'y trouver des applications à faire; le Caustique de grandes fautes à reprendre; le Pusillanime des couleurs brusques; le faux Philosophe des vérités trop dures, c'est-à-dire des noirceurs, dignes du libèlle; l'Honnête Homme, le Juge Impartial, une sincérité sans fiel, un amour généreux pour la société, des mœurs et du patriotisme."[1] Finally, the unknown author of *Le Bourgeois philosophe* states: "Les Faux Philosophes, tout en parlant tolérance et humanité, sont encore plus fanatiques que les faux dévots et nous savons jusqu'où ils peuvent aller."

The above quotations not only show how closely the plays are related to the movement, they also serve to indicate that the primary function of these plays is to combat the doctrines of the contemporary Philosophe as a menace to organized society. This is true of the majority of them, since only a few attempted to defend the Encyclopedic Party. That is to say, this group of plays has in view the rise, growth, and spread of a specific movement, the encyclopedic movement. They sometimes criticize certain specific individuals. Their criticism of the historical Philosophe, therefore, should be the crystallized expression of the contemporary criticism launched against him. We shall find that it will vary in detail as well as in intensity. This is because the Philosophe had an evolution in which each play portrays a particular moment. Still, the point of view is ever the same: certain individuals possess dangerous, impractical ideas, which they are propagating among the masses. If the propagation of these ideas continues, society, the church, and the state will be overthrown.

The plays are so closely related to the movement hostile to the Philosophe[2] that the change is reflected in them each time the opposition took a new course. It remains now to give a

1. Avertissement de l'éditeur, p. 1.

2. For an excellent detailed account of the opposition to the Philosophe, see Belin, J., *Le Mouvement philosophique de 1748 à 1789*. Paris, 1913.

brief outline of the four more or less distinct phases through which the quarrel passed, and to show how the fifty-one plays can be divided into sub-groups, each sub-group depicting a particular stage. The observation should be made, however, that the dates assigned to each phase of the quarrel are, at best, only approximate.

Although the origin of the philosophic movement has been traced back to the opening years of the eighteenth century,[1] the first definitely expressed opposition did not make itself felt until the second decade; from then until the middle of the century there was no significant change. Beginning in 1720, and extending to 1730, there was considerable criticism directed against Leibnitz[2] and Bayle.[3] Later, around 1740, there was a similar antagonism to Christian Wolff[4] and his disciples. But the attack, during this first phase, was rather scattered and feeble. In the case of Bayle, it was directed against his skepticism; and in the case of Leibnitz and Wolff, against their cumbersome methods. That is to say, the abstract doctrines, rather than the authors, were assailed. Moreover, the movement was against philosophers as well as Philosophes.

The second phase of the fight began in November, 1750. After the publication of the *Prospectus de l'Encyclopédie*, the opposition became more pronounced. The opponents at the same time changed their method of attack. Instead of condemning the abstract doctrines of philosophers who gave indication of becoming Philosophes, criticism was now directed against certain works which smacked of the unorthodoxy of the Encyclopedic Party. Among the publications attacked, the most important were the two discourses of Rousseau,[5] the

1. RCC, 1908-1909, and 1909-1910.

2. See *infra*, Chapter II.

3. See *Mercure*, July, 1722, p. 54, where there are some critical remarks on the *Dictionnaire* of Bayle. See also the letters of Néricault Destouches of July-October, 1743, in the same periodical.

4. See *infra*, Chapter II.

5. *Discours sur cette question: si le rétablissement des sciences et des arts a contribué à épurer les mœurs?* Paris, 1750. *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité.* Amsterdam, 1755.

works of Voltaire,[1] the *Encyclopédie*, and Helvétius' *De l'Esprit*. These works, however, were less severely condemned than their authors, who were assailed as enemies of society and its institutions. This second phase, then, embraced the period of direct persecution of certain individual Philosophes.

A third phase was inaugurated while the second was still in progress. Beginning in 1758, and extending to 1774, a gradual change of tactics on the part of some critics of the party occurred. Previous to 1758, the general trend of the opposition was against certain outstanding leaders of the new school of thought, such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot. With the publication of Helvétius' *De l'Esprit* began the phase of intensive criticism of doctrines. The one constantly attacked was Helvétius' doctrine of personal interest, but with it were united Rousseau's doctrine of the decline of civilization, Voltaire's deism, Diderot's naturalism, and the theories of the Encyclopedists and the Physiocrats.

After 1762, the victory of the Philosophes was practically assured; but opposition to them never ceased, even in the closing years of the century. The opposition, however, gradually took a different course. To win their battles, the Encyclopedists had recruited to their standards men of every complexion, upon all of whom they had bestowed the title Philosophe. In this group were many incompetent, unscrupulous individuals, called "sous-philosophes," who had been criticized as early as 1759. As the party became assured of victory, even its own members turned their attention to throwing out these disagreeable bed-fellows, but neither they nor their adversaries ever succeeded in completely suppressing the obnoxious group.

In sum, there were four periods more or less distinct during which the opposition to the philosophic movement manifested itself. The periods, with their approximate dates, are as follows:

1. See Bengesco, *Bibliographie de Voltaire*, Vol. I.

1) 1720-1750.—A period of uncertainty during which philosopher and Philosophe are not clearly distinguished.

2) 1750-1760.—A period of personal attacks against outstanding Philosophes, chosen as dangerous radicals, authors of certain unorthodox works.

3) 1758-1774. — A period of attacks against certain outstanding doctrines and ideas professed by the Philosophe and characterized by the opposing party as endangering the preservation of organized society.

4) 1759-1789.—A period of attacks against the "sous-philosophe."

Each step which we have indicated above will be traced in the plays which will be covered by this study. For the first fifty years of the century, there are very few plays. Those which do exist direct their criticism against a rather indefinitely portrayed Philosophe or against Leibnitz and Wolff. The criticism is milder than in the last half of the century; and yet, strangely enough, this criticism, found in four plays stretching from 1720 to 1742, is virtually the same which is launched against the Philosophe between 1750-1800. *Le Philosophe à la mode*, *Le faux Savant*, *Damocle ou le Roi philosophe*, and *Les Philosophes* (1742) belong to this sub-group.[1]

After 1750, the playwrights started to pick out specific individuals and to hold them up to ridicule on the stage, at times attacking them as dangerous radicals: *Les huit Philosophes aventuriers*, *Les huit Philosophes errans*, *Le Cercle*, *Les Philosophes* of Palissot, *Le Bureau d'esprit* belong to this type.[2]

But the public condemned these personal attacks and, after the successful run of Palissot's play in 1760, only one more attempt was made to ridicule a contemporary Philosophe upon the stage. And yet, although the authors kept within the limits prescribed by their audiences, there can be no doubt that, in many of the plays composed after 1760, the doctrines of certain specific individuals are presented. The doctrines are

1. See *infra*, Chapter II.
2. See *infra*, Chapter III.

sometimes confused, but the one assailed in a number of plays is the doctrine of personal interest of Helvétius. Palissot's *Les Philosophes* criticized it, and, similarly, denunciations of it can be found in *Le petit Philosophe*, *Les Philosophes de bois*, *Le Valet philosophe*, *Le Séducteur*, *La nouvelle Philosophie à vau l'eau*, *L'Homme dangereux*, and *Les Courtisannes*.[1]

The movement against the "sous-philosophe" began in 1759, when Marmontel published his *Soi-disant Philosophe*. In the drama, we find two distinct types of "sous-philosophes." There was the type patterned after Marmontel's model.[2] There was also the type modeled upon those individuals who adopted some particular fad paraded by the Philosophe, such as the excessive love for England, the mania for writing, or the mania for several branches of science. To this type belong *L'Anglomane*, *La Physicienne*, *Les Philosophes modernes*, and *La Philosomanie*.[3]

Lastly, certain of these plays, such as *Zoroastre*, *Les Philosophes manqués*, *Les Originaux*, and the three *Socrate* plays, were written in justification of the new philosophy.[4]

1. See *infra*, Chapter IV.
2. See *infra*, Chapter V.
3. See *infra*, Chapter VI.
4. See *infra*, Chapter VII.

CHAPTER II

EARLY ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PHILOSOPHE (1720-1750)

In the drama, the initial attack against the Philosophe was made by the Jesuits. One of their various methods of teaching philosophy, in the closing years of the seventeenth century, consisted in presenting before the students dialogues between the philosophers of antiquity.[1] Or, instead of a dialogue devoid of action, the Jesuit teacher holding the chair of philosophy constructed, especially at Easter, a whole play concerning some point of ethics. It was quite natural for him to turn later to specific philosophers[2] for his material, at the same time making a distinction between philosophers of sound or of unsound doctrine.

It was in this tradition that, in 1696, the Jesuit priest Lejay[3] composed a play entitled *Damocles, sive philosophus regnans, drama*,[4] which was printed at Paris (J. Mariette), in 1703. Nothing is known about the nature of its performances,[5] although the play, apparently, was well-known.

1. See Bordelon, *Les Philosophes à l'encan*, 1690. See also *Catalogue Soleinne*, Vol. VI, Table II, p. 112: "Théâtre philosophique, sur lequel on représente, par des dialogues, dans les Champs-Élysées, les Philosophes anciens et modernes. (Par M. Bordelon.) Paris, Jean Musier, 1693, in-12."

2. See Longuemare, *Le Théâtre à Caen, 1628-1830*, Paris, 1895, p. 14: "Le 20 février suivant, 1699, dix-sept élèves de rhétorique donnaient un drame tragi-comique intitulé: 'Jupiter mores emandandi cupidus.' Le but de l'auteur est de montrer que la réputation des anciens philosophes est surfaite et que souvent leurs exemples sont loin de s'accorder avec leurs maximes." And p. 19: "Le 30 décembre, 1720... on donnait une pièce à illusion intitulée 'Antiquarius.' Le but avoué était un peu celui de la pièce de 1699, railler l'hypocrisie des philosophes qui cachent sous les apparences de la vertu le dérèglement de leur conduite."

3. Lejay, G. F. (1657-1734) was professor of rhetoric at Louis-le-Grand. Voltaire was one of his students.

4. See Boysse, *Théâtre des Jésuites*, p. 198, and *Soleinne*, n° 256.

5. Boysse is inclined to place them at carnaval time. *Op. cit.*, p. 198.

De Léris, in his *Dictionnaire des théâtres* (1761), states that the Abbé Poncy de Neuville presented, in 1741 or thereabout, at the College of Mâcon, a comedy preserving the Latin title *Damocles*. This is presumably Lejay's comedy, reworked a second time; for, already in the year 1728, Buffier[1] had published his *Suite de la Grammaire française sur un plan nouveau*, and, seeking an example of clear prose for a "poème-dramatique-comique," he found none better than a translation of Lejay's Latin play,[2] which he entitled *Damocle*.

The plot[3] of *Damocle* is exceedingly meagre. A king of Sicily, seeking to ascertain the trend of public opinion, learns that Damocle, philosopher, and author of the *Art of Reigning*, is the only man in the kingdom outspoken in his criticism of royalty. Damocle appears in order to present his book to the king, and, in the presentation, he states that only a Philosophe can hope to govern wisely. The king, in accordance with a prearranged plan, offers to surrender the crown to him. He accepts it, but, inexperienced in the art of reigning, he soon finds his nation swept by war, and his own life endangered. In a frenzy, he yields the throne to its former occupant, who, upon resuming authority, condemns him to lose his life because of his incompetence. Later the sentence is commuted on the promise of the philosopher to have his beard close cropped.

The portrayal of the philosopher is of more concern to us than the plot of the play. First, he is an idealist. He believes in simple life, simple attire, abolition of unnecessary ceremo-

1. Buffier, C. (1661-1737), author of the *Cours des sciences... pour former le langage, l'esprit et le cœur*, 1732, fol., and of the *Examen des préjugés de Bayle*. Buffier was a Cartesian who had modified his Cartisianism with the principles of Locke. In some respects he is the forerunner of Condillac. He was regarded with considerable favor by the later Philosophes. See *Mémoires de Trévoux*, 1737, p. 1504; *L'Encyclopédie*, Vol. III, préface; and Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV*.

2. See *Suite de la grammaire française sur un plan nouveau*, p. 235.

3. The author has evidently been influenced in his plot by the legend of Damocles and Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse.

nies, peace, the happiness of humanity, the fostering of the golden age, and he has faith in the goodness of mankind. Nevertheless, if in theory an idealist, in practice he is a misanthrope. He reproves a servant for showing deference to his king; he finds fault consistently with laws and conduct; and in a fury he curses the stupid, blind human race for opposing his plans. Another trait which is emphasized is his mania for writing. He has completed an enormous folio volume on the *Art of Reigning*. The title is significant, for it brings out a very important characteristic in the make-up of the man. Damocle is a political theorist. What are his theories? First, a king should seek to content his subjects by forestalling their complaints. All wars are to be condemned, all taxes abolished. A king content with the happiness of his people needs no revenue. He should govern without assistance from his subordinates, or if assistance is needed he should consult the philosophers of the realm. Better still, he should install one of them on the throne.

The author's criticism of Damocle is not severe. His sincerity is not questioned, but he is called a visionary and a *tête creuse*. The author finds that, for one who has done nothing more than create an imaginary wisdom, he is far too boastful of his attainments and too blind to his defects, one of the most serious of which is his belief that his idealism is practical. When put to the test, he fails miserably. Fortunately the test was only a practical joke; the wars, both external and internal, were fostered purposely for the occasion, and the king has only to step back upon the throne to restore order. But what if a philosopher should really become king? Should we not expect foreign wars, civil wars, bankruptcy, turmoil and murders?

Damocle, while he shows resemblances to each, is neither wholly an ancient philosopher nor a true eighteenth-century Philosophe. His name is taken from antiquity, and his dress and character are modeled upon the dress and character of the ancients. He has a long beard, traditional sign of the

philosopher; he wears a flowing robe, and he sits in the public places to teach the masses after the manner of the Grecian Stoics. His ill-humor is very like the ill-humor of Diogenes, and his independance bears a close resemblance to that of Socrates. On the other hand, Damocle possesses several traits in common with the Philosophe. First of all, he is a man of letters. He is a student in political philosophy, interested in the art of reigning and ambitious to become the counsellor of kings.[1] In addition, some of the details of his idealism are later to become the fundamental principles of the encyclopedic group. For instance, his theory of the goodness of mankind, or of the perfectibility of the human race, or of the abolition of wars may be found in many of the Philosophic Party. Finally, the most severe indictment which is brought against him is made on the score that he entertains theories subversive of existing institutions. Therein lies his chief likeness to the Philosophe of 1760.

In the year in which Buffier translated Lejay's play, Duvaure published a comedy in three acts entitled *Le faux Savant*.[2] The purpose of Duvaure's play differed somewhat from that of *Damocle*. Lejay's play had portrayed the danger incurred when the false theories of a visionary are put into

1. In this connection, see Ducros, *Les Encyclopédistes*, p. 163. In discussing the political theories of the *Encyclopédie*, Ducros writes: "Que le Roi soit donc aussi puissant, aussi autoritaire qu'il voudra, pourvu qu'il soit, avant tout, le Roi des Philosophes." And p. 165: "Le principal grief des Encyclopédistes contre Louis XV, c'est qu'il ne goûte pas leur philosophie et qu'il n'aime pas leurs personnes. S'il avait eu l'esprit de protéger l'Encyclopédie, les Encyclopédistes l'auraient loué sans réserve, comme ils ont loué le Marc-Aurèle de Berlin et la Sémiramis du Nord."

2. *Le faux Savant*, comédie en trois actes. Par M. Du Vaure. A Marseille, chez Jean Mosey, imprimeur du Roi, et de la Marine, et Libraire, au Parc, M. DCC. LXXV. Avec approbation et permission.

According to Desnoiresterres (p. 26), the play contained allusions to the magistrate Dupuis, great protector of poets and virtuosos, and Chérier, the censor, refused to approve it until Du Vaure had suppressed the obnoxious passages. Then the play became a stock play of the period, being given in the "théâtres de société" as well as in the public theatres. It also went through several printed editions. See editions of 1728, 1749, 1775 (Marseille, Jean Mosey), 1773 (Paris, Duchesne).

practice. Duvaure attempted to depict the falsity behind the new learning and the social consequences which would accrue if these so-called savants were allowed, or rather encouraged, to mingle with honest but ignorant people.

Once more the plot of the play[1] is secondary in importance to the characterisation of its central figure, in this case Polimatte. Three features are emphasized: he figures as a universal savant, as a man of letters, and as a man of the world. He is called "une bibliothèque vivante" by Dorimon, who adds: "Il parle de tout en maître, il raisonne de tout, il sait tout." He quotes Homer, he is intensely interested in physics, chemistry, astronomy, and jurisprudence. In chemistry, he is just completing an experiment "qui exercera furieusement les physiciens." In philosophy, he is an admirer of Aristotle, Descartes, and Malebranche. Moreover, he is not interested exclusively in gathering details of knowledge, he desires to exhibit them. Hence he is an author: he has just finished *La Mythologie chronologique* and has translated into verse the Code and the Digest for magistrates who know no Latin. In addition, he is a critic, a poet, and a pamphleteer, having just had printed in Holland some pamphlets which are being secretly distributed. Lastly, he is a man of the world, possessing a large reputation, a circle of powerful friends, and much influence.

Universal savant, man of letters, man of the world, why should Polimatte be ridiculed? Because his claims are mere pretense. In reality his ignorance is appalling: he thinks

1. The plot of *Le faux Savant*, which has much in common with the plot of *Le Philosophe soi-disant* (see *infra*, Chapter V), is as follows: Polimatte has flattered Dorimon until the latter has promised to give him Lucile, his daughter. But Lucile, who loves Lisidor, attempts to circumvent her father's desire by suborning Timantoni, her Italian teacher, to aid her to entrap Polimatte in a misdemeanor. Timantoni enlists the aid of Fortuné, Polimatte's valet, who is in love with Lizette, serving-woman of Araminte, aunt of Lucile and sworn enemy of Polimatte. A plot is formed whereby Lizette pretends to be a wealthy widow, madly in love with Polimatte. He is attracted by the jingle of her gold and yields to the temptation. Dorimon is convinced of Polimatte's treachery and dismisses him.

Troy situated in Africa "où est maintenant Constantinople," he defines infinity obscurely, for information he substitutes platitudes. Nor is he, in fact, an author: he plagiarizes his verse and he has his pamphlets composed by a hack writer. His social standing, too, is a sham. He has entered into the household of family after family, only to be ejected upon the discovery of his hypocrisy.

Polimatte is an imposter, therein lies the danger. With his pretense of knowledge, he is discrediting real knowledge. Moreover, he is propagating a false knowledge. Using his ignorance as a stepping-stone to his own success, he is encouraging among faddists incapable of becoming scholars a desire to pose as savants, thereby sowing strife and discord among families. Give him an egotistical system of philosophy such, for instance, as that of Helvétius, and he becomes immediately a menace. For the time being, however, he is an immature Philosophe, lacking the one specific trait whereby all Philosophes are distinguishable: he is not yet a theorist, although there are indications that he might easily become one. In 1759, Palissot would have called him a *sous-philosophe*, and Marmontel would have written for him a story like *Le Philosophe soi-disant*. But in 1728, neither term had been invented, although, as we see, the individual really existed.

The Jesuits, however, had already portrayed a pure Philosophe. In May, 1720, there was presented, at Louis-le-Grand, the college of the Jesuits at Paris, a play in five acts and in verse entitled *Le Philosophe à la mode*.[1] The play,

1. *Le Philosophe à la mode*, comédie par le père Du Cerceau, jésuite. Jouée pour la première fois à la petite tragédie des jésuites au mois de mai 1720. Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal 907, fol. 212. Another Ms., which I have not seen, is said to be at the Bibliothèque Mazarine 2002 (1399)-34, fol. 623.

In the year 1696, the Jesuits had given at the College of Avranches an *entr'acte* entitled *Les Philosophes à la mode*. Nothing is known of this *entr'acte* save what can be gleaned from the program: "*Les Philosophes à la mode* serviront d'entr'acte à la pièce précédente parce que celui que nous nous y sommes proposé pour héros étant le plus polyécri-

which has never been published, is ordinarily attributed to Du Cerceau.[1] As in the case of *Damocle*, it seems to have been written with the intention of impressing upon the students at Louis-le-Grand the distinction between philosophers of sound and of unsound doctrine. But there is a distinction between the two Jesuit plays: Buffier presents what might happen in a hypothetical case; Du Cerceau portrays what is actually taking place. The latter makes this clear in a sort of program which he distributed at the performances: " On entend par le nom de philosophe à la mode une espèce de sages prétendus dont toute la philosophie est composée d'un amour infini pour eux-mêmes, et d'une indifférence parfaite pour tout le reste du genre humain, gens qui, sensibles jusqu'à la faiblesse et au ridicule sur les moindres choses qui les touchent, ont une fermeté d'âme, et une constance à l'épreuve des plus grands maux qui ne tombent que sur autrui : très vifs sur leurs moindres intérêts et incapables de se déranger en rien pour servir autrui, même dans les affaires les plus importantes. Ce que l'on se propose dans la pièce, est de faire sentir que ce genre de philosophie, qui rend un homme inutile à sa patrie, à ses proches, à ses amis, et à tout ce qui ne tient pas immédiatement à sa personne, est le poison et la ruine de la société civile."

The *Mercure* devoted to *Le Philosophe à la mode* a fifty-page article.[2] Now why should the *Mercure* accord so much space to a play written by an amateur dramatist and given by students? Evidently the editor either was himself interest-

vain de son siècle; j'ai jugé à propos de jouer, quoique très légèrement, l'extravagance et la barbarie de ces ergotistes... J'oubliais de dire que, pour donner divers mouvements à nos figures de philosophes, on mêlera quelque (*sic*) parmi eux un galant qui pourra leur causer quelque chagrin."

1. Du Cerceau, Jacques-Antoine (1670-1730) was a Jesuit priest who taught the humanities at La Flèche, Rouen and Bourges. Later he became preceptor of the Prince de Conti. For his life and works, see Péricaud, A., *Œuvres de Du Cerceau*, Lyon et Paris, 1828, 2 vols., 8vo. The editor, however, does not think that Du Cerceau is the author of this play. See *op. cit.*, Introduction, Vol. I, p. v.

2. *Mercure,* June, 1720, p. 66 ff.

ed or thought that his readers would be. The editor of the *Mercure* in June, 1720, was the Abbé Buchet; it is likely that this ecclesiastic was sympathetic toward Jesuit productions as such, and he may have desired to insure the success of one of his colleague's plays. Still, would he have cared to devote a fifty-page article to such a play, if he had not been confident that the public would be interested? Thus the article seems fully as significant as the play. It advertised what would have been otherwise a relatively unknown production, and it marked the beginnings of an alignment of the two opposing forces: the Jesuits uniting on one side, a group of *sectateurs* on the other. And finally, it indicated that the public at large was awakening to the question of the rise and spread of the Philosophes.

Not content with giving an analysis of the play, the Abbé Buchet insists upon furnishing his own interpretation. We have already mentioned the printed program which Du Cerceau had distributed. Buchet quotes verbatim and adds by way of explanation that the author, to carry out his plan, picked a young man who is quite regular in his habits, but who is an out and out egotist. This young man, says Buchet, the playwright calls a Philosophe, "parce que ces sortes de gens le prennent assez sur ce ton-là, et que pour soustraire à la pénétration du public ce que leur amour-propre a d'odieux, ils tâchent de le couvrir d'un vernis de philosophie. Il l'appelle philosophe à la mode, parce qu'il paraît, dit-il, que cette philosophie a grand nombre de sectateurs."[1] Then follows a long analysis, interspersed with more than ample quotations.

Du Cerceau constructed his plot in a way that brings out fully the character of Narcisse, the Philosophe. Onuphre has two nephews: Narcisse, studious and retiring; and Pamphile, gay and care-free. Of the two, he prefers Narcisse. Chrysante, a friend of the family, and father of a daughter destined in

1. *Mercure*, June, 1720, p. 68.

marriage to one or the other of the nephews, comes to Paris on important business which necessitates the aid of Narcisse. The latter refuses to see him. In the meantime, Pamphile has rendered a great service to the son of a certain Philémon, who arrives to thank him. A certain Menippe arrives simultaneously to take his lesson in philosophy from Narcisse, and a long exposition is given of the Philosophe's ideas. The remainder of the play is devoted to a test of those ideas. The sickness of a friend, even the bankruptcy of his uncle do not move him. On hearing, however, that his property has disappeared with that of his uncle, he immediately becomes excited. The uncle's bankruptcy was only feigned as a test of the nephew. In the test, he showed his weakness, and his uncle abandons him to his fate.

The character of Narcisse is for us of capital importance. The striking element in it is his selfishness, from which are derived all his vices and virtues. He is studious, regular in his habits, and restrained in his emotions: characteristics good in themselves, but, in the case of Narcisse, with a bad motive behind them. Having developed a fondness for physical inactivity, and a yearning for his own comfort, he renounces and scorns society in order the better to satisfy these cravings. Thus his studiousness, regularity of habits, and restraint, all virtues in themselves, are indirectly a consequence of his selfishness. Needless to say, not only his virtues but his vices as well are derived therefrom. He has no consideration for the comfort of others, or solicitude for their welfare. A friend may die, he does not shed a tear; another friend may lose his all, he makes no effort to aid him; whereas the death of his humming-bird causes him a three weeks' mourning, and the loss of his own property sends him into a rage. These defects have inevitably led to others. Having begun with unconcern for his fellow man, he ends with contempt; being unable to see his own faults, he is prompt to see those of his brother Pamphile; and, believing himself perfect, he is quick to believe others debauched.

While these traits of character are not necessarily inherent in a Philosophe, Narcisse has some which are: he is a thinker who has built out of his personal defects a doctrine, and with his doctrine he is forming a school of philosophy which threatens to sap the strength of the nation. Menippe, friend of Narcisse, has a regularly assigned period for instruction in the new philosophy, and we are permitted to be present at one of these lessons.[1] Menippe mentions that his father has become very excited over the account of the battle of Pavia. Narcisse comments[2] that people are often moved by such trifles. Menippe concedes that Narcisse is correct. He adds, however, that he has been unable to convince his father, who reproaches him for his insufficient sentiment and his lack of filial affection. Then he is unjust, says Narcisse, for, all having sprung from the same father, we owe ourselves to a common humanity. From this love for humanity he deduces the theory of love for self:[3]

> De ce Raisonnement que faut-il conclure?
> Que nous ne devons tant à personne qu'à nous,
> Que ce premier devoir doit dominer sur tous...

Whence he concludes that it is sheer folly to sacrifice one's self for others, especially since repose is the end and aim of life.[4] Love and self-sacrifice are not the only ideals which are banished. Narcisse has already abandoned patriotism:[5]

> L'amour de la patrie en vain échauffe, enflamme,
> La première patrie est au fond de notre âme...

and pity and friendship no longer find a place in his heart:[6]

> Eh! que servent aux morts nos regrets inutiles
> En sont-ils pour cela plus heureux, plus tranquilles?

1. Act II, scene III.
2. *Mercure*, June, 1720, p. 89.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

It is easily seen how this doctrine of self-interest, if followed to its logical conclusion, can become a most serious menace to society. Cléon, at the end of the play, gives a clean-cut statement of this menace:[1]

> Le Philosophe donc n'est chargé que de lui
> Et de tout autre soin se remet sur autrui ;
> Redevable à lui seul, et borné dans lui-même,
> Il n'a qu'un seul devoir qu'il remplit bien, il s'aime.
> Qu'on ne nous parle plus d'honneur, ni d'amitié;
> Loin d'ici désormais compassion, pitié :
> Oh ! ces impressions d'un cœur tendre et sensible
> Qui se livre à son zèle, et tente l'impossible,
> Source de vains soucis funestes au repos,
> Ne sont que les vertus des dupes et des sots.
> Malheureux, je le dis dans l'ardeur qui m'emporte,
> Les Rois dont les sujets penseraient de la sorte !
> Malheureux les pays qui dans de fâcheux temps,
> N'auraient pour défenseurs que de tels habitants !

That is, such a doctrine threatens the maintenance of morality, and the existence of the state. As long, however, as it can be confined to one man, there is very little danger. The obnoxious individual can easily be isolated. It is only in the spread of the doctrine that the peril will become acute. Unfortunately, being mainly negative, making no demands upon its converts, relieving them, rather, of the burdens imposed upon them by society, it makes converts easily. These converts are recruited from two classes. There are persons like Menippe, capable, intellectually, or socially, of rendering real service to humanity, who accept the doctrine because it is a novel form of speculation. Then there are the unscrupulous or the unintelligent, who see in a doctrine of this kind a surcease from all physical and mental effort. Frontin no sooner learns of his master's philosophy than he adopts it, and we have, for the first time, the "Valet Philosophe," a stock character destined to reappear many times during a period of seventy-five years.

1. *Mercure*, June, 1720, p. 110.

Le Philosophe à la mode is an important document in the history of the philosophic movement on the stage. In 1720, for the first time, there is felt the need to distinguish between the philosopher and the Philosophe, and to seek a definition of these new self-styled philosophers. Such was the object of the program quoted in the *Mercure*. Moreover, the aim of *Le Philosophe à la mode* differs from that of all previous plays presenting a philosopher. Previous to 1720, the purpose of such plays is either didactic, as in the case of the Jesuit plays, or comic, as in the case of such plays as *Démocrite amoureux*, or *Le Philosophe trompé par la nature*. In striking contrast with them, *Le Philosophe à la mode* is purposely presented to combat a group of "sectateurs" who possess a "doctrine." The doctrine is subversive of the best interests of the individual, and its spread constitutes a menace to organized society. In other words, *Le Philosophe à la mode* is essentially a social satire (in the manuscript it is called a "pièce satirique") directed not against philosophers in general but against the newly-constituted Philosophe. The character of the criticism of him is significant. Nor did it cease after the presentation of the comedy in 1720; strangely enough, this play, presented in 1720 by youths twelve years old, contains the criticism of the Philosophe which was to reappear, in 1760, in *Le Petit Philosophe*, and which was repeated time and time again between 1760 and 1778.

The criticism of the Philosophic Party contained in *Le Philosophe à la mode* came at a date which merits attention. The fact that an obscure Jesuit, in 1720, should foresee that Helvétius' doctrine of self-interest was the goal at which the encyclopedic movement would terminate, is, to say the least, surprising. What constituted the basis of such a forecast? While the "secte," as we know it, is of a much later date, there was, between 1715 and 1730, a fermentation in the world of philosophy. Even before 1715, the young Arouet wished to be identified as one of the Philosophes,[1]

1. Arouet to Fyot de la Marche, May 23, 1711. Ed. Moland, Vol. XXXIII, p. 3.

and the forerunners of the philosophic movement, Bayle and Fontenelle, were attracting considerable attention and making innumerable converts. Voltaire, in 1721, complains to Fontenelle of the desire among the women to become Philosophes.[1] Thus in this complex life of the regency, there were to be found not only certain philosophers who were beginning to term themselves Philosophes, but also people who, aping them because they were the fad of the day, and assuming the title as a mark of distinction, were bringing about a shift in the dignity and the meaning of the term. Hence is was not unnatural for a moralist, seeking a defect in character, to attach this vacillating word to a trait which, until then, had been regarded as a minor flaw of the philosophers. Or it may even be that at this early date Du Cerceau already realized that behind the contemporary philosophical movement was a still unformulated doctrine of personal interest, to which later on Helvétius gave its definite form.

If the Jesuits can be credited with the inauguration in the drama of the attack upon the eighteenth-century Philosophe, it was an exponent of freemasonry who, in the year 1742, carried on the struggle by means of an anonymous three-act comedy in prose entitled *Les Philosophes*.[2] Many of the repertories fail to include this play in their lists, and in those which mention it the notice is brief. Mouhy[3] claims that it was given in a "théâtre de société," but where and under what circumstances, he does not seem to know. Soleinne states that the play has been wrongly attributed to Palissot, who was twelve years old at the time, a confusion evidently due to the identity of title with Palissot's 1760 production.

To judge from the copious commentaries on the lines which the author has added by way of explanation, the play was

1. Voltaire to Fontenelle, June, 1721.
2. *Les Philosophes*, comédie en 3 actes et en prose. La Haye, Gérard Block, MDCCXLII. Mentioned in Soleinne, No. 1856.
3. *Tablettes dramatiques*.

intended, from the very first, rather for reading than for presentation. The plot[1] is merely an artificial framework for the thesis of the author. The denouement is of no importance. The interesting thing in the play is the dialogue, which is taken up wholly with the relative merits of the Philosophe and the Freemason. Soleinne noted: "Cette pièce tourne surtout en ridicule les absurdités et les mots étranges de la langue scolastique. L'auteur s'attaque à quelques systèmes philosophiques plutôt qu'aux auteurs de ces systèmes." In part, Soleinne is correct: the great preoccupation of the characters in the play is to study *la logique*, *la politique* and *le droit des gens*. Their first care is to memorize the "principes." Method, of course, is all important. The syllogism is much vaunted, and we are flooded with definitions, enthymemes, corollaries, major and minor premises, scholions, and the various principles of contradiction, indiscernibles, sufficient reason, the vacuum, and continual motion. The first book that Aristote takes to his master is *La grande Logique*. Léandre, beginning his course in philosophy under Espérance, reads in *La grande Logique*. He is delighted by the "subordination des sciences, comme de l'ontologie, des deux psychologies, de la psychologie et d'autres." Etourdi, proposing to Christine, confesses to having just finished *La Psychologie empirique du Philosophe*. And scene VI of Act II treats of the doctrines of "êtres simples," monads, and perpetual motion.

1. Madame Bérinte has two daughters, Espérance and Christine, the one Philosophe and the other not. Espérance is loved by Léandre, whom she is endeavoring to convert to the sect with considerable success. Christine loves Octave, freemason and opponent of all Philosophes. She, in turn, is pursued by L'Étourdi, nine-day-old Philosophe who hopes to prove his love by means of the syllogism. After incessant debating and buffoonery, Christine marries Octave and Espérance weds Léandre. There is, in addition, a sub-plot. Léandre has a valet, Aristote, whom he initiates in the secret of philosophy. L'Étourdi attempts to initiate his valet Eudoxe also, but with little success. Both valets are in love with Marianne, maid to Espérance and Christine. Aristote makes love after the philosophical method of L'Étourdi; Eudoxe, with less accomplishments than his rival, uses the common-sense method. Marianne prefers the latter procedure.

Now the great exponent of scholastic philosophy, in the closing years of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth-century, was Leibnitz, who reedited, in 1670, the *De veris principiis et vera ratione philosophandi* of Marius Nizolius de Bersello,[1] with a preface in which he reverts to the scholastic method. It was Leibnitz who, in 1697, first used the term monad in the sense of 'unity'.[2] His *Théodicée* was published at Amsterdam in 1710, and again in 1734-1740 with annotations by the Chevalier de Jaucourt. In 1720, Desmaizeaux edited a compendium containing various of his treatises, along with those of Clarke and Newton. There can be no question of the favor enjoyed by Leibnitz in France during the first half of the eighteenth century, although all of his works were not translated into French until 1762.[3]

Still, Leibnitz was less known than his friend and successor, Christian Wolff. This philosopher had introduced into the scholastic method of Leibnitz processes used in geometry. It was Wolff's theory that, in philosophy, everything can be demonstrated as rigorously as geometric problems. His works[4] formed a fairly complete philosophic system, and around them centred a school which lasted more than half a century. They were not only known in Germany;[5] Frederick II did everything possible to make them available to the Philosophes in France.[6] In 1736, J. Deschamps translated the *Logica*,[7] and Frederick hurried off a copy to Voltaire,[8] who replied in evident joy: "J'ai lu la *Logique* de M. Wolff,

1. Fontenelle, *Essai sur Leibnitz*, Vol. VI, p. 465.
2. Piat, *La Monadologie*, p. 96.
3. See Quérard, *La France littéraire*.
4. *Philosophia rationalis, sive logica*, Francfort, 1728. *Philosophia prima, sive ontologia*, 1730. *Cosmologia generalis*, 1731. *Psychologia empirica*, 1732. *Psychologia rationalis*, 1734. *Ius Naturae*, 1740.
5. Voltaire, *Œuvres* (éd. Moland), Vol. XXXIV, p. 126.
6. Wolff had been driven out of Prussia by Frederick I. He was, therefore, looked upon as a martyr to the cause of philosophy. He was recalled in 1740 by Frederick II.
7. *Logique de Wolff*, 1736, Berlin, 8vo. Deschamps translated also in 1736 the *Pensées philosophiques*.
8. For Frederick's letters and Voltaire's replies, see Voltaire, *Œuvres*, Vol. XXXIV, pp. 248, 304, 318.

que vous avez daigné m'envoyer, j'ose dire qu'il est impossible qu'un homme qui a les idées si nettes, si bien ordonnées, fasse jamais rien de mauvais. Je ne m'étonne plus qu'un tel prince aime un tel philosophe." The following year, Voltaire still showed himself to be among the admirers of Wolff, but not unreservedly. To Frederick vaunting the boldness of Wolff in defining "les êtres simples," Voltaire replies that there is a good deal to gainsay in his "métaphysique," which is "un peu longue, un peu trop pleine de choses communes, mais d'ailleurs admirable, très bien liée, et souvent très profonde." By 1741, the novelty of Wolff's works had worn off and Voltaire could utter no word of praise for one of his former idols.[1]

The author of *Les Philosophes* must have composed his play with the works of Christian Wolff specifically in mind, for the criticisms in the play accord with the criticisms of Wolff contained in Voltaire's correspondence. For instance, Christine thinks that: "Ces messieurs-là aspirent à être philosophes, avant que d'être hommes. Chez eux, il faut passer par tant des in-4, il faut pénétrer par tant des ologies, avant qu'on vous dise un mot de l'homme ou de l'humanité." And Octave reproaches the Philosophes for their unintelligibility: "Il [le Fri-maçon] a peur de ces grands diseurs de riens et il n'aime pas ces grands mots, qui n'aboutissent qu'à embrouiller toute vérité... Un de vos philosophes, vous la voulant

1. Voltaire to Maupertuis, August, 1741. Ed. Moland, Vol. XXXVI, p. 91. The letter is as follows: "Je ne mettrai pas, mon cher aplatisseur de mondes et de Cassinis, de tels quatrains au bas du portrait de Christianus Wolffius. Il y avait longtemps que j'avais vu, avec une stupeur de monade, quelle taille ce bavard germanique assigne aux habitants de Jupiter. Il en jugeait par la grandeur de nos yeux et par l'éloignement de la terre au soleil, mais il n'a pas l'honneur d'être l'inventeur de cette sottise, car un Wolffius met en trente volumes les inventions des autres et n'a pas le temps d'inventer. Cet homme-là ramène en Allemagne toutes les horreurs de la scolastique surchargée de raisons suffisantes, de monades, d'indiscernables, et de toutes les absurdités que Leibnitz a mises au monde par vanité et que les Allemands étudient parce qu'ils sont Allemands... C'est une chose déplorable qu'une Française telle que Madame Du Châtelet ait fait servir son esprit à broder ces toiles d'araignée."

faire comprendre, se servira de mille détours. Il commencera toujours, pour ainsi dire, de la création du monde, et des premières définitions des êtres, il postulera, il axiomatisera, puis il démontrera, il problématisera, corollairisera, scholiotisera, et au bout du compte après cent reprises, toutes de la même sorte, il se perdra lui-même dans son galimatias et vous dira toute autre chose que ce que vous attendez de lui."

The primary object of the play is not, however, to give a critique of the works of Leibnitz and Wolff, for Octave finds them "fort beaux en leur genre, fort sublimes et très dignes d'admiration..." They may constitute a danger, but that danger is insignificant compared with the widespread mania for philosophy. For instance, here in *Les Philosophes* is a group of nine people, four of whom have gone completely insane over philosophy. In l'Etourdi's own group there is a whole troop of Philosophes, who have formed a sect devoted to saving humanity from ignorance, and who are making themselves ridiculous with their pretended philosophy. Here is Espérance, reasonable enough in most things, who thinks that her husband should be a Philosophe, and her sister's husband too. Etourdi thinks that love which can not be proven by a syllogism is of no consequence. Naturally, the philosophic equipment of such individuals is pitiable: L'Etourdi has studied philosophy for nine days, Léandre for two, Aristote for one. They are idlers, troublemakers and fools. But the ill does not stop there. Aristote takes one lesson and immediately makes it his mission to save Marianne and Eudoxe from ignorance. After the second lesson, he vies with his master in claiming the attributes of philosophy: "Croyez-vous donc, monsieur, qu'il dépend des larges habits et des grosses perruques d'être bon ou mauvais philosophe, et que la philosophie ne puisse tout aussi bien résider dans la livrée, et dans une tête sans perruque...? Sachez, mon très cher maître, notre relation mutuelle à part, qu'au fait de philosophe, je ne vous cèderai jamais le pas, et que, quoique vous m'ayez devancé d'un jour en doctrine, et que je sois

votre disciple, j'espère pourtant en savoir autant et même plus que vous." Thus another "Valet Philosophe" takes his place beside Crispin and threatens to overturn the established social order in the name of a false intelligence.

The mania for philosophy is as serious a peril as the so-called new philosophy founded on the doctrine of selfishness. What is the cure for it? A return to common sense. Philosophy is to be left in the hands of those qualified to seek out its mysteries. But the great mass of humanity does not possess this qualification. Let mankind in general leave alone a dogmatic system which makes fools of us all and devote itself to the ordinary tasks of life. Aristote concludes for the author: "Voyez-vous bien, collègues, qu'avec toute notre philosophie, nous ne sommes que des ânes. Nous nous rompons tous les jours la tête de mille définitions et démonstrations. Nous en faisons même pour tant d'autres mondes possibles, et dans ce monde-ci où nous vivons, nous sommes tous, autant que nous sommes ici, les dupes d'une pauvre sotte fille."

Thus on the French stage between 1720 and 1742 the evolution of the Philosophe had been marked step by step. Four playwrights had distinguished three types of Philosophes who constituted a menace to society, and had shown wherein they were dangerous. The first type is the individual who is a "demi-savant," who for purposes of social advancement vaunts his wisdom, who pretends to be what in reality he is not, and to know those things of which he proves to be ignorant when put to the test. The second type is the man who has adopted a system of philosophy in order that he may cover up a defective character and enable himself to continue in idleness, selfishness, and disregard for others. The third type is the person who, dazzled with the name of Philosophe, has attempted to usurp the title, initiating himself, as best he can, in the new-fangled fads of philosophy, and aping, in more or less imperfect manner, the leaders. Briefly, the first type pretends to know, but does not; the

second thinks it knows, but does not; the third type wants to know, but can not. And all three types constitute a serious menace to the social order: the exponents of the first apply a sham philosophy; of the second, a pernicious philosophy; of the third, a shallow philosophy. Thereby all three types are considered to be bringing into disrepute the fair name of philosopher: the first type by rendering the term discreditable; the second, by rendering it odious; the third, by rendering it ridiculous. Each of the three types of Philosophes singled out in the first half of the century can be found over and over again in the drama of 1748 to 1800. *Le faux Savant* is but an early interpretation of the *Philosophe soi-disant; Le Philosophe à la mode* in 1720 is an exact portrayal of *Le petit Philosophe* of 1760; *Les Philosophes* of 1742 is but a generalized satire of the fad for philosophy such as can be found in *La Physicienne* or *Le Bureau d'esprit* of 1777. There is, however, this difference between the criticism of the first half of the century and that of the second half: before 1750, the criticism is more scattered and less bitter, and it is uttered with a vagueness which entirely disappears after 1755. The impression is gathered that these few individuals who possessed the penetration to foresee the menace of a coming philosophical movement were nevertheless lacking in ability to combat its growth. After all, they were but striking out in the dark at an intangible peril. Not until the criticisms had been aimed at specific individuals could the danger involved in the movement be fully grasped and presented to the public. Hence, the next step was to choose among the Philosophes certain individuals who stood out as typical of the sect, and to criticize these persons rather than the indefinite, general Philosophe portrayed in the first half of the century.

CHAPTER III

CRITICISM OF INDIVIDUALS (1750-1760)

The authors of the first half of the century had assailed the growth of the new philosophy along general lines, without direct reference to its individual apostles. In the opening years of the second half of the century, however, the need was felt to designate the Philosophes, and a departure was made from the tendencies of the first half. The philosophic movement had progressed far enough to develop leaders who stood out head and shoulders above the masses, so that those hostile to the movement could now single out the defects of these lead ers as representatives of the class.

The advantage of such a method is obvious. As long as the term Philosophe referred indiscriminately to an individual who might have one of several possible defects, it was difficult to bring home to a slow-thinking public the perils which menaced the social order on account of his presence. Consequently, public opinion, which the opponents of the Philosophe had hoped to stir up against the new apostles, was nothing more than an inchoate mass of individual opinions directed aimlessly at an intangible foe. Once a typical Philosophe could be, at is were, put on display, his opponents gained immediately two distinct advantages. Attempts at a definition could now be superseded by a "horrible example" as a concrete instance of the object defined; instead of saying: "A Philosophe is an individual who pretends to know when he does not or thinks to know when he can not," they had only to say: "Here is a typical Philosophe, here are the details of his life, here are his works, here are some results which these works

have produced," and the haziness would disappear. There was also ground for hope that, by picking for exhibition the leaders of the movement, they could overwhelm them with ridicule and thus destroy their influence.

Such were the motives behind the personal attack upon certain leaders of the Philosophes. To select them was not difficult. The second half of the century opened with Montesquieu and Voltaire towering above their lieutenants. Montesquieu soon dropped out, but his place was taken by Rousseau. To Voltaire and Rousseau were added, as the *Encyclopédie* became more and more important, Diderot and D'Alembert and finally Helvétius. Then, the general staff was, for the time being, complete. But there were certain chiefs of divisions who were sooner or later singled out for ridicule: M^me^ Geoffrin, Grimm, Duclos, D'Argens, M^lle^ Clairon, M^me^ D'Épinay, Marmontel, D'Holbach, La Harpe and others. These latter were subjected in due time to direct attack, but for the period of intense personal attacks (1750-1760) the brunt was borne by Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, D'Alembert and Helvétius.

The drama was well adapted to ridicule of the individual Philosophe, and in the opening years of the second period a group of playwrights identified the term Philosophe with specific individuals in an effort to suppress a doctrine by heaping personal abuse upon its protagonists. The group of resultant plays, though important, is not large. In 1752, *Les huit Philosophes aventuriers de ce siècle* was printed. Two years later appeared *Les huit Philosophes errans de ce siècle.* Shortly afterward, in 1755, Palissot gave his *Cercle*, in which he mercilessly satirized Rousseau. A storm of criticism was directed against him in condemnation of this personal attack, but, failing to heed it, he wrote, five years later, his famous *Philosophes*, which gave rise to such a protest that not until seventeen years later, when Rutlidge's *Bureau d'esprit* was presented, was another attempt made to place a contemporary Philosophe upon the stage. Only two more plays of this type are known to me, and those two by title only: *Le Sau-*

vage hors de condition by Sticotti, and *Voltaire apprécié* by Edmé Billard (1779).[1]

It is probable that the complexity of *Les huit Philosophes aventuriers de ce siècle*[2] prevented it from ever being staged. This complexity arises from a procedure of the author whereby two personified individuals are attached to each of the eight Philosophes: a mistress to represent the inclinations of the Philosophe; a valet to suggest his manner of writing. Thus Uranie Hermaphrodite, Voltaire's mistress, has L'Enthousiaste as his valet; D'Argens, husband of Babet la Chinoise, has Matthieu l'Hollandais; Marivaux, lover of Marianne, has Pierrot le Naïf; Prévost, lover of the Baronne des Douleurs, has Tranche-Montagne; Maupertuis, lover of a Mathématicienne Laponnaise, has La Simétrie; Crébillon, lover of a Belle Imaginaire, has L'Eternel Discoureur. And Mainvilliers is lover of a "fille d'un prêtre," with Arlequin Philosophe as his valet. The scene of the play is laid at the frontier, in the inn of Madame Tripaudière, at the sign of Uranie, because "ces Messieurs ont toujours, les uns ou les autres, quelque noise avec les ministres ou magistrats."

The play is weak in plot and devoid of dramatic action. The author explains that he has made his heroes talk and act according to their style of writing and their individual character. He avows having even copied several passages which can be found in the works of the Philosophes, and having placed these passages in the mouths of the respective authors in such a way as to fit perfectly into the conversation at hand. And he adds slyly: "Ces messieurs ne peuvent croire qu'on ait voulu leur faire de la peine, comment pourraient-ils se trouver

1. *Le Sauvage hors de condition* is mentioned in Soleinne, Nos. 2002, 2797, and in Desnoiresterres, p. 10; *Voltaire apprécié* is mentioned in Soleinne, Nos. 2253, 3192, and 3805.

2. *Les huit Philosophes aventuriers de ce siècle ou Rencontre imprévue de MM. Voltaire, D'Argens, Maupertuis, Marivaux, Prévost, De Crébillon, Mouhi et de Mainvilliers dans l'auberge de Mad. Tripaudière à l'enseigne d'Uranie.* Comédie de nos jours. A La Haye, M. DCC. LII. (A copy in the "Collection Rondel" at the Comédie Française.)

ritiqués par leurs propres idées?" This formula is a new one n the history of the philosophic quarrel. To select an indi- vidual Philosophe, to have him talk and act as he has written, o bring home the folly and pettiness of his ideas and deeds, uch is the intention of this whole group of plays.

The most striking feature of this satire is that Philosophe nd man of letters[1] seem to be interchangeable terms, though vith more stress upon the term Philosophe. When Voltaire, t the sight of the inn of Uranie, voices his political and phil- osophical ideas regarding the pleasures of love and of good heer, L'Enthousiaste, his valet, calls him not a poet, but a Phil- osophe. Maupertuis figures as an astronomer and philosophic- l mathematician and author of *Tables Astronomi-Géo-Hydro- Graphiques*. Mainvilliers is "Le Petit-maître Philosophe," which means to Madame Tripaudière that he has not sufficient unds to pay for his lodging: "Ah, juste ciel! Il est peut-être petit-maître par le babil et par l'habit; Philosophe par la bourse." And Voltaire compliments the company on its beha- vior, finding that it has played a comedy "digne, assurément, du caractère extraordinaire de l'héroïne Madame Tripaudière et des héros philosophes qui y jouent leurs rôles."

There can be noted, from time to time, a sharp criticism of he group. L'Enthousiaste thinks that it would be well for he Philosophes to get their minds straight, this being pre- sumably the normal position of a thinker's mind. Madame Tripaudière, to whom Philosophe and Bohemian are synony- nous, believes that a Philosophe has an empty head; but he nay be tolerated, provided his purse is full. And she finally exclaims: "Les bonnes pâtes de gens avec leur philosophie! l n'en faudrait plus qu'autant pour nous rendre tous fous. Allons, allons, du courage, à table, et venez armés jusqu'aux dents pour attaquer les ennemis que vous allez avoir en tête." Mainvilliers replies sarcastically: "Le charmant dénouement pour les Philosophes du temps."

1. See Lefranc de Pompignan (*Journal nouveau*, Vol. II, p. 124), who nsists that the two terms are not synonymous.

There was a note attached to the end of the *Huit Philosophes aventuriers* which ran: "L'on donnera leurs conversations à table et autres endroits, si ce début plaît." Two years later, there appeared *Les huit Philosophes errans*,[1] a play modeled quite closely upon the *Huit Philosophes aventuriers*. The plot is concerned solely with marrying Folette, the daughter of Madame Dubongoût, to one of the wandering Philosophes. The action takes place in the inn of Madame Dubongoût, which is situated on the French frontier, "rendez-vous ordinaire des auteurs disgraciés ou qui voudraient l'être." The eight Philosophes, save for Mouhi, who is replaced by Montesquieu, are the same as in the preceding play, and, as in the preceding play, each one is accompanied by a valet whose name evokes a characteristic element of the author's works. Thus Voltaire is accompanied by l'Enthousiaste, "son écuyer, et anglais de nation"; Maupertuis, by Lapponnardière, "son valet héros"; Montesquieu, by Le Légiste, "son secrétaire valet à deux mains, romain de nation"; Crébillon, by Le Massacreur, "grec de nation"; D'Argens, by Matthieu l'Hollandais, "son homme d'affaires"; Prévost, by Tranche-Montagne, "son confident, espagnol de nation"; Marivaux, by Bagatelle, "son secrétaire, et soupçonné mal à propos d'être français"; Mainvilliers, by "son fidèle Achate, et né dans la maison de son maître."

Here again, Philosophe and man of letters seem to be interchangeable; but, in contradiction to the first play, the stress is placed upon the man of letters rather than upon the Philosophe. In fact, it would be difficult to make Prévost and Crébillon fit into the picture on any other score. The six other personages also are represented distinctly as writers rather than as Philosophes. Voltaire is hailed as the best poet of his age and the writer of France's greatest epic; Maupertuis is the

1. *Les huit Philosophes errans ou Nouvelles Découvertes de Voltaire, de Maupertuis, de Montesquieu, du Marquis d'Argens, de l'abbé Prévost, de Crébillon, de Marivaux, et du Chevalier de Mainvilliers.* Comédie du temps présent. MDCCLIV. (A copy at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, B.L. 11155.)

mathematician who has evolved the theory that the earth is flattened at the poles; Mainvilliers is still the "petit-maître philosophe," but that means only "poète badin"; and D'Argens is presented from the same point of view.

There are in the play few references to the activities of the Philosophe. *L'Esprit des lois*, says Madame Dubongoût, "n'est pas de ces jolis livres qui attaquent simplement les mauvais noirs comme ceux de ce sot chevalier de Mainvilliers. C'est un livre qui lève orgueilleusement la tête contre les plus gros gouvernements." She also exclaims, when Marivaux's *Marianne* is called light reading: "Le livre de Marianne! Galant et léger. Y pensez-vous, Messieurs? Il y a dedans une solidité et une si grande métaphysique de gouvernement que je me suis mille fois étonnée qu'il n'eût pas plus des milliers de lettres de cachet sur son corps." But, although few in number, these references are of importance, since they stress the fact that certain books are spreading subversive doctrines.

While references to the activities of the philosophers are meagre, statements concerning the private life of the authors are frequent; for example, that Voltaire is very fond of gold, that he has 20,000 *livres* income, and that he received an enormous profit from his epic poem. His conflict with Frederick is mentioned, his enmity with Maupertuis is sketched in some detail, and his quarrelsome, irritable, sarcastic nature is emphasized. On the other hand, there is no allusion whatever to his historical works: Voltaire the Philosophe is completely overshadowed by criticisms of Voltaire the poet and private citizen.

If, as Soleinne[1] states, the *Huit Philosophes aventuriers* was written by Mainvilliers, it is quite probable that the *Huit Philosophes errans* was from the pen of the same author, since it closely resembles in form and expression the play of 1752. Now Mainvilliers was not an opponent of the Philosophes. At the time of the writing of the first play, he was in intimate relations with Voltaire, and had just annotated an edition of

1. Soleinne, Vol. III, p. 315.

the *Siècle de Louis XIV.*[1] Hence, although these two plays in a certain way partook of the spirit of the opponents of the Encyclopedists, they were not directed against the philosophic movement. They contain rather a free-lance's appraisal of the Philosophe, an appraisal possibly nearer to the views of the neutral public than that contained either in plays which assailed the Philosophe or in those which defended him. Lacking the definite aim and the serious criticism which we have seen in the plays of the first half of the century, they nevertheless throw an interesting side-light upon our problem. Who, to the public of 1752-54, stood out as the nine leading Philosophes? Voltaire, Montesquieu, Mouhi, D'Argens, Prévost, Crébillon, Marivaux, Maupertuis, and Mainvilliers. That is to say, three men to whom we now accord the title; one novelist, one playwright, one novelist and playwright, one mathematician, and two extremely mediocre poets, while others who are now known as Philosophes and who must have been in the public eye by 1754 are missing. Rousseau, who was destined to be called one year later "The Philosophe," is omitted by Mainvilliers; Diderot and D'Alembert are not mentioned.

The two plays are of interest as an indication of the trend of the discussion at the given moment. They served to bring into the philosophical struggle of 1752-54 several elements which, previous to 1752, had not been present. First, they introduced a new confusion by using the term Philosophe as synonymous with man of letters. Second, the ridicule of the nine Philosophes was aimed rather at their personal characteristics than at the defects in their philosophy. At that particular moment, it was perhaps more dangerous for the Philosophe to be attacked as an individual with flaws in his character than as an abstruse philosopher with defects in his doctrine, and those who opposed the movement were quick to sense the possibilities of the new type of offensive. Clément, in the *Nouvelles littéraires*,[2] welcomed it in the following terms:

1. Quérard, *La France littéraire*, Vol. V, p. 448.
2. *Nouvelles littéraires*, Vol. II, p. 243.

"En voici bien une autre qui m'arrive de Hollande, c'est-à-dire dont je reçois à l'instant le titre imprimé: Les Huit Philosophes aventuriers de ce siècle, ou Rencontre imprévue de... Il n'est pas douteux que cette entrevue ne soit un coup de théâtre. M. de Mainvilliers, qui l'a imaginé, et qui dans Le Petit-maître Philosophe que vous me fîtes l'honneur de me présenter il y a six mois, a fait ses preuves d'homme d'esprit sans goût et sans idée de bienséance, n'aura sûrement rien négligé pour se rendre digne de la curiosité du lecteur malévole... Quiconque sait un peu l'histoire littéraire entendra ce que cela veut dire; à tout autre qui ne la sait point, on ne s'en soucie guères, salut." There is small wonder that the enemies of the Philosophes should regard Mainvilliers' two plays as grist for their mills. They learned from them how to attack the Philosophe by placing the individual himself upon the stage, as well as how to assail the "bureaux d'esprit" of the day. Rutlidge follows Mainvilliers in direct line.

No protest of any kind was made against this first attempt to satirize specific individuals as representatives of the party. But when, on November 26, 1755, during a festivity incident to the unveiling of a statue to Louis XV, Palissot presented at Nancy *Le Cercle ou les Originaux*, it awakened a storm of protest. The play originated in a request for a spectacle to amuse the populace, and Palissot chose as his form a comedy-parade. The various episodes of the play presented a poet, a "femme savante," a financier, a doctor, a Philosophe. Of these characters, all could have been found in the traditional types of Molière or of his successors. There was consequently no pressing need for first-hand observation or direct portrayal of known individuals, but in the cosmopolitan Blaise-Gille-Antoine who had published signed works, who had informed the public in prefaces that he cared not a farthing for its suffrage, and who had written, merely for the sake of gaining renown by means of paradoxes, a treatise in which he proved that the misfortunes of humanity came from that which they adored, the public could not fail to recognize the citizen of Geneva, author of the *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*.

In *Le Cercle*, Rousseau is "The Philosophe." Why did Palissot, not knowing Rousseau, pick him as the butt of his satire?[1] Since the play was written to be presented before Stanislas, author of a reply to the *Discours*,[2] Palissot may have been seeking to curry favor with his master; or, since Palissot admired Voltaire and desired to be in his good graces, and since Voltaire had just written his famous letter to Rousseau,[3] the author of the *Cercle* may have hoped to attract the favorable attention of the patriarch of Ferney. I believe, however, that there is a more adequate explanation for the attack on Rousseau. Fréron, also from Lorraine, also an admirer of Stanislas, also a member of the Académie de Nancy, and the already-recognized arch-enemy of Rousseau, may well have exercised an influence upon Palissot.[4] Had it not been for Fréron, it would scarcely have appealed to Palissot, with his decided inclinations towards the Philosophic Party, to assail a member of a group which he hoped some day to join. Hence it would seem that credit for the only original portrait in Palissot's comedy should be given to Fréron. In that light, the D'Alembert correspondence[5] regarding the play takes on a new interpretation, and the letter of Rousseau to D'Alembert, which ran: "A l'égard de Fréron, je n'ai rien à dire de mon chef, parce que la cause est commune..." assumes a new significance.

Once Palissot had determined to introduce a Philosophe,

1. See the account of this affair related in the *Confessions*, Hachette edition, Vol. VIII, p. 284.

2. See Quérard. Rousseau, in turn, replied to Stanislas' refutation.

3. Letter written from Les Délices, 1755. Cf. especially the lines: "On n'a jamais employé tant d'esprit à vouloir nous rendre bêtes: il prend envie de marcher à quatre pattes, quand on lit votre ouvrage."

4. See letter of D'Alembert to the Comte de Tressan: "...Permettez-moi, au reste, mon cher et illustre confrère, de vous faire observer que sa majesté n'est pas bien informée, quand elle croit que l'insulte faite à Rousseau n'a rien de commun avec les feuilles de Fréron; elle ignore sans doute l'indignité et la brutalité avec laquelle Fréron s'est déchaîné en toute occasion contre Rousseau." D'Alembert, *Œuvres*, Vol. V, p. 389.

5. See *supra*, n. 4.

his normal field of choice embraced four individuals: Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot and Rousseau. Voltaire, whom he both admired and feared, was out of the question. D'Alembert, whose writings were abstruse, was hard to dramatize;[1] moreover D'Alembert was a close friend of Voltaire, and in offending the one, there was the danger of offending the other also. Between the two remaining possibilities, the choice of Rousseau was natural. He was more conspicuous, and he could be made more spectacular. In 1754-55, his eccentricities, such as his independence, his ethical reforms, and the Armenian costume which he affected, were attracting considerable attention. While to many he seemed a charlatan and an impostor,[2] yet, in 1754, he was one of the leaders of the encyclopedic movement. Closely connected with Diderot, he was contributing his quota to the *Encyclopédie*, which explains why he was so vigorously defended by d'Alembert and the Comte de Tressan.

In the fight between Palissot and D'Alembert, Rousseau is the buffer between the Philosophic Party and their opponents. He was the Philosophe who had retained the most independence, and who, consequently, could be attacked with the most impunity by the Fréron group. It so happened, also, that he was the one whom the encyclopedic group could sacrifice, if necessary, without seriously endangering their cause. Yet, while the Philosophe and his opponent grappled for an advantage, Rousseau, the one who should have been most concerned, looked on unconcernedly. Finally, a generous impulse prompted him to interfere and to end the discussions, much to the disgust of D'Alembert, who had been skillfully maneuvering to silence forever both Palissot and Fréron. As it was, D'Alembert was forced to desist, and the stir he had made only served to increase the sale of Palissot's play, and to awaken the wrath of its author.

1. D'Alembert did appear later in *Le Bureau d'esprit* and possibly in *Les Philosophes.*

2. See Delafarge, *Palissot, sa vie et son œuvre* (1912), p. 49.

Palissot's criticisms of Rousseau are similar to those found in other responses called forth by the *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*. Rousseau, in his opinion, defends an untenable position, for his life is as much a paradox as his doctrine. He complains of being a philosopher, and refuses to cease, for cessation means the loss of prestige which he has gone to extremes to secure. Accordingly, to maintain that prestige, he is forced to pile paradox upon paradox, and with each new one runs the risk of being called a madman rather than a sage. In short, Rousseau has created for himself a situation which is incompatible with the dignity of a Philosophe. He himself is aware of this, and yet he persists, and that, in itself, is sufficient proof of his insincerity. Boileau has said: "Un sot trouve toujours un plus sot qui l'admire," and the saying is applicable here, for Rousseau's paradoxes have attracted to him partisans who are clamoring for more paradoxes. Therein lies the real menace, which can be averted only by unmasking the leader, who admits that he does not believe what he says or does, and acts only "dans l'idée qu'un Philosophe devait penser, parler, écrire et même s'habiller autrement que le vulgaire."

The play, although a distinct success at Nancy, failed to attract widespread attention until it was challenged by D'Alembert on the ground of the impropriety of presenting worthy citizens on the stage. Palissot defended his position as best he could, citing Molière as his guide, and giving instances[1] where Rousseau had been held up to the ridicule of

1. When Palissot attempted to justify himself on the ground that Rousseau had previously been caricatured on the stage, his assertion was correct. Rousseau's defense of Italian music had given him considerable notoriety. When in 1762 Dancourt's *Fées* was presented, there was attached to it a "vaudeville," entitled *Les Philosophes du siècle*, in which the defenders of the Piccinistes were ridiculed. Again, in Patu's *Adieux du goût*, 1754, there is an allusion to the quarrel of the Piccinistes and the Gluckistes. And finally, Chévrier, in the *Revue des théâtres*, 1754, made an allusion to Rousseau. Palissot, then, would seem to have ample precedent for his satire. There is, however, this difference in the method of presentation. In the three comedies just mentioned, the satire is a veiled, indirect satire. For instance, the "vaudeville" in the *Fées* which referred to Rousseau, ran as follows:

the public. His last word came in 1771: "Si l'on veut bien considérer que le Philosophe qu'on crut y reconnaître avait affiché le plus profond mépris pour notre musique, pour les arts, pour les grands en particulier, pour l'espèce humaine en général, qu'il n'avait jamais employé ses rares talents qu'à renverser toutes les notions communes; si l'on veut bien se souvenir qu'il avait déclaré la guerre ouverte entre le public et lui... enfin si l'on se rappelle encore que cet homme singulier, sa misanthropie amère, ses paradoxes insultants avaient été plus d'une fois livrés au ridicule sur les théâtres de Paris, alors on pourra juger si le badinage de cette scène passait les bornes de la vraie comédie, et s'il convenait, en faveur d'un homme qui n'a rien ménagé, de persécuter l'auteur avec tant de violence."

In *Le Cercle*, Palissot ridiculed only one Philosophe; in *Les Philosophes*,[1] he attempts to present a group of individuals some of whom it is difficult to identify. Favart[2] mentions "Diderot, D'Alembert, Rousseau et tous les auteurs de l'Encyclopédie." The *Journal encyclopédique*[3] names Diderot, D'Alembert, and Duclos. Collé[4] names Diderot, Helvétius, and other Encyclopedists. D'Alembert,[5] in a letter to Voltaire

> Honorer les sçavans,
> Même dans sa patrie;
> Voir l'essor des talents
> Sans fiel et sans envie,
> Les vrais sages pensent ainsi.
> Diffamer l'harmonie
> De nos musiciens;
> Aux seuls Italiens
> Accorder du génie,
> Voilà les sages d'aujourd'hui.

Between such a couplet and the scene of the *Cercle* there is a marked difference.

1. *Les Philosophes*, comédie, en trois actes, en vers, représentée pour la première fois par les Comédiens François ordinaires du Roi, le 2 mai 1760. Par M. Palissot de Montenoy, de plusieurs Académies. A Paris, chez Duchesne, Libraire, rue S. Jacques, au-dessous de la Fontaine Saint-Benoît, au Temple du Goût. MDCCLX.
2. *Correspondance*, Vol. I, p. 29.
3. *Journal encyclopédique*, May, 1760, p. 120, note.
4. *Journal historique*, Vol. II, p. 238.
5. Voltaire, *Œuvres*, édition Moland, Vol. VIII, p. 79.

(May 6, 1760), states that "les seuls maltraités sont Helvétius, Diderot, Rousseau, Duclos, Madame Geoffrin, et M^lle^ Clairon..." Finally, in the 1785 edition of the *Œuvres complètes* of Voltaire[1] a note cites Duclos, D'Alembert, Diderot, and Helvétius.

Delafarge[2] has summed up the resemblances. Crispin is a satire upon Rousseau, but Crispin is not Rousseau: he himself claims to be Rousseau's disciple. Dortidius is Diderot. Apparently Théophraste is Duclos, and Valère is presented as a criticism on Helvétius. Cidalise might well be Madame d'Épinay, although Collé[3] saw in her a satire on Helvétius, and the public took her to be Madame Geoffrin. Later, it was thought that Palissot was depicting Madame de la Marck. Grimm is alluded to only as "le petit Prophète," and in one line Delafarge sees a possible reference to M^lle^ Clairon.[4] It is not improbable that Carondas is a caricature of D'Alembert.[5]

How far do the portraits resemble the originals? Rousseau, who, in *Le Cercle*, refused to give up his honors, here seeks to escape them, "pour vivre dans les bois." He persists in his philosophy, but he has never taken part in deceit nor trickery, and though he may be classed as a madman and a cynic, he is upright and evidently sincere. In the famous "quatre pattes" scene,[6] the doctrine of the *Discours sur l'inégalité* is expounded at length, but Palissot's criticism of it is moderate. Rousseau, on the whole, suffered from the maliciousness of the public rather than from the satire of Palissot. For the public chose to see a caricature of Rousseau in Crispin, while the

1. Vol. XIV, p. 191.
2. *Op. cit.*, Chapter III.
3. *Journal historique*, Vol. II, p. 238.
4. Act III, scene IV. "Nous aurons un parti jusque dans les coulisses."
5. The name of D'Alembert, it will be remembered, was Jean *Le Rond* D'Alembert. Is there a play on words here in the name Car-rond-as with an allusion to the mathematical inclinations of the author?
6. See *supra*, p. 38, note 3. In 1759, Teisserenc is said to have presented at Liege a play called *La Femme philosophe*, in which one of the characters comes upon the stage on all fours. See *Journal encyclopédique*, May, 1760, p. 128.

author intended only to present the effect upon a valet of a doctrine like that of the decline of civilization. Diderot is handled more roughly. Damis calls him an avowed "sot," and treats him as a hypocrite and a shallow charlatan, notoriously insincere. In the scene of the Philosophes, his expansiveness is classed as hypocrisy, and is contrasted with his quarrelsomeness. A portrait of Duclos is not clearly drawn. All that we learn regarding Théophraste is that his judgements accord with those of Diderot and that he holds the position of peace-maker among the members of the sect. These characteristics are not confined to Duclos but might be applied to D'Alembert, or even to Voltaire. In fact, if Théophraste is Duclos, the characterization is singularly weak,[1] and Palissot would have us believe that he is the little lieutenant of the party. As Duclos was independent of the Philosophes, even of Voltaire, he can not be definitely identified with Théophraste. Nor can Helvétius be fully identified with Valère, represented as the chief of the sect and confessor of Cidalise; for the real Helvétius, as Collé had noted at the time of the play, was far from resembling the scoundrel Valère, and already at that time his beneficence, his self-sacrifice, and his generosity were the theme of numerous anecdotes.

Thus the *Philosophes* is not so definitely a character-sketch as some have held. Rousseau and Diderot are distinguishable, but inadequately characterised; Duclos is not unmistakably portrayed, and Helvétius defies identification. Cidalise, in whom Collé[2] saw the portrait of Helvétius in skirts, has never been clearly identified, nor has M. Carondas, native of Pézenas. Palissot must have realized all of these uncertainties of portraiture, for he wrote to Voltaire:[3] "Enfin, monsieur, je n'ai tracé mes caractères d'après aucun philosophe en particulier; mais d'après les principes de quelques philosophes."

Taking Palissot at his word, let us now briefly examine his

1. This was remarked by Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, Vol. IX.
2. *Journal historique*, Vol. III, p. 240.
3. Palissot, Œ*uvres* (edition of 1777), Vol. VI, p. 327.

play, not as a realistic character-sketch, but as the exposition of the principles of certain Philosophes. Palissot sought these principles in various books of the encyclopedic group: in *L'Esprit*, in *L'Esprit des lois*, in *L'Essai sur l'inégalité*, in *Considérations sur les mœurs*, in *L'Encyclopédie* and in the works of Diderot, not to mention the works of La Mettrie and D'Argens. If the play is rather a critique of the works of the Philosophes than a satire on individuals, Valère's exposition to Carondas of the doctrine of personal interest is not Helvétius speaking to his valet, it symbolizes the appeal of Helvetius' book to a valet. Similarly, when Cidalise outlines the nature of her book to Rosalie, it is the outline of *L'Esprit* which is again presented. Finally, when Crispin enters upon the stage in the "quatre pattes" scene, it is not so much a criticism of Rousseau as an exposition of the *Essai sur l'inégalité*. Palissot, in 1760, like the anonymous writer of 1742, was attempting an analysis of systems. But in 1760 systems were rapidly becoming involved and numerous. Palissot, in attempting to embrace them all, confused himself[1] as well as his audience, who found it much easier to attach specific catch-phrases to individual Philosophes than to trace the details of a system. Had Palissot limited himself to one work, or even to one man, he would have simplified the debate; and his criticism would have been less confusing.

After all, Palissot's main object can not have been to satirize individuals. His inclinations may have been in that direction, and he had given ample proof of his malignity in *Le Cercle*, but he was shrewd enough to know that ridiculing a few individuals would not now silence the Philosophes, although a certain group at court, it will be remembered, supported this play in the hope of silencing them forever. They could be silenced only by showing the effects of the doctrines of the sect

1. See the letter of Voltaire to Palissot, in which the former points out the various errors of the latter in attributing to the Philosophes ideas which were, in reality, held by others. Moland edition, Vol. VIII, p. 433.

upon society, and the attack shifted from individuals to a now recognized party. Hence, when the personal satire of Palissot has been eliminated as merely incidental, his criticism of the Philosophes amounts to this: a sect, pretending to advance civilization but in reality retarding its progress, is inducing the credulous masses to error by such pompous words as 'humanity', 'prejudices', 'personal interest', 'interpretation of nature'. The partisans of the sect are disturbers of the public peace, skilful at destroying, not at constructing. And they are making proselytes. Marton exclaims: "Paris en est rempli." Playing basely on the human emotions, they instruct the scoundrel how to be more of a scoundrel; witness the education of M. Carondas, or of Crispin, who imitates his former master. They gain by threats what they can not win by persuasion—a favorite procedure of Dortidius.

Where threats and persuasion fail, flattery is used; witness its effect on Cidalise. Hence, with personal interest the motive of all action, we shall have mothers forgetting their daughters, valets robbing their masters, citizens abjuring their country and king, believers casting off their faith; in short, the whole social order is threatened. Palissot, in his first letter to Voltaire,[1] offered as his defence for having written the play: "Autant je suis pénétré d'admiration pour les vrais philosophes qui, comme vous, monsieur, ont rendu la vertu respectable dans leurs écrits, autant je suis éloigné de ce sentiment pour ces écrivains téméraires qui ont osé mettre au jour une philosophie destitutrice des mœurs et des lois."

In sum, Palissot's *Philosophes* contributed little criticism which had not been proffered before. The method of presenting outstanding Philosophes to the public had been inaugurated, six years previously, by Mainvilliers. When Palissot criticized the philosophical system of Helvétius, he did no more than the *Philosophes* of 1742 had done for the philosophi-

1. Palissot, *Œuvres* (edition of 1777), Vol. VI, p. 310. Letter of May 28, 1760.

cal system of Wolff. Even in his processes, Palissot found a model in previous plays: was he not accused of having written a bad imitation of *Les Femmes Savantes*? The "quatre pattes" scene had been tried out, the previous year, in *La Femme philosophe*. As for the basic idea of the play,—the attack against a sect which was threatening society,—Palissot added nothing to Du Cerceau's attack of forty years previous. The play, however, did appear at a moment when the Philosophes and their opponents were struggling for supremacy, and Palissot, who had a certain amount of brilliancy, carried more weight than any of the other playwrights. Then too the polemics awakened by *Les Philosophes*[1] served to give it prominence, and thereby to stimulate similar attempts to get a public hearing. We have already noted the enormous increase in 1760 of plays directed against the Philosophic Party.

Some had considered the episode of the *femme savante*, in *Le Cercle*, a portrayal of Madame Geoffrin,[2] and in *Les Philosophes* Marton's description of the social gatherings of Cidalise[3] aroused similar suspicions; but Palissot denied the implication and Madame Geoffrin, as well as Voltaire, her admirer, chose to accept the word of the author. Finally, in 1777, the salon of Madame Geoffrin was actually depicted upon the stage in *Le Bureau d'esprit*.[4] Rutlidge promised in the preface

1. See Delafarge, *op. cit.*, Chapter IV.

2. Palissot was also accused of allusions to Madame du Châtelet and to Voltaire. He denied both charges, attributing them to the maliciousness of his enemies.

3. The passage as it occurs in *Les Philosophes* (Act I, scene 1) is as follows:

> Madame a depuis peu réformé sa maison,
> Nous n'extravaguons plus qu'à force de raison.
> D'abord, on a banni cette gaieté grossière,
> Délices des traitans, aliment du vulgaire...
> Quelquefois on admet, au lieu de Vaudevilles,
> De savants concertos, de grands airs difficiles...
> Mais notre fort, monsieur, c'est le raisonnement,
> Quelque temps dans le cercle, on parla politique;
> Enfin tout disparut sous la Métaphysique.

4. *Le Bureau d'esprit*, comédie en cinq actes et en prose, P:M:L:C:R G:A. Time makes more converts than reason — Le Tems fait plus de

of his first edition to respect the persons and manners of the time, in depicting "tranquillement et de bonne foi les abus de l'esprit et du sçavoir." Still, for all his profession of good faith, one has only to be acquainted with the first scene of the play to recognize that the *Corps respectable* which he mentions is none other than the salon of Madame Geoffrin. Madame de Folincourt, who is about to undertake a journey to Warsaw, who has a salon, "temple des Muses et de la Philosophie," who is in constant communication with crowned heads, who judges "un homme d'esprit" according to the shape of his back, and who holds two gatherings weekly ("le lundi est pour les savans, et le mercredi pour les beaux-arts"), is obviously Madame Geoffrin. Contemporaries did not altogether agree in their identification of the other characters. For Grimm,[1] M. Cocus is Diderot, Cucurbitin is Holbach, Rectiligne is D'Alembert, Orsimont is Condorcet, Du Luth is La Harpe, Faribole is Marmontel, Calchas is Arnaud, Thomassin is Thomas. Bachaumont[2] gives substantially the same list as Grimm, save that Cucurbitin is Cadet, that Cocus is Macquer, and that Voltaire is added to the list. La Harpe[3] names d'Alembert, Condorcet, Thomas, Marmontel, and himself. Desnoiresterres, Soleinne and Faber[4] add Capperonnier and Cadet de Veaux.

The preceding testimony indicates that Folincourt is Madame Geoffrin, Curviligne is D'Alembert, Orsimont is Condorcet, Du Luth is La Harpe, Faribole is Marmontel, Version is Diderot. Cocus is either Macquer, Diderot, or Capperonnier. Cucurbitin is Holbach or Cadet; Calchas is Thomas or Arnaud. Voltaire is not impersonated in the play, but he is subjected to much criticism in the fourth and fifth acts, and his bust dominates the assembly (Act IV, sc. VIII).

Prosélites que la raison. Seconde édition, revue, corrigée, et augmentée. A Londres. MDCCLXXVII.

1. *Correspondance*, Vol. XI, p. 362.
2. *Mémoires secrets*, Vol. IX, p. 305.
3. *Correspondance*, Vol. II, p. 30.
4. Faber, *Le Théâtre français en Belgique*, Vol. II, p. 88.

The satire in Rutlidge's play is at times stinging, and several of Madame Geoffrin's friends, notably La Harpe and D'Alembert, are treated with excessive asperity. None of them, however, appear as Philosophes, save in name. All of them are ragamuffins, leeches, parasites upon society, deficient in the learning which they profess to display, intolerant and irritable. Each, of course, has his personal defects: La Harpe believes himself the apostle of *bon goût*, Condorcet is past master in flattery, and D'Alembert is a schemer, concealing his ambitions under a hypocritical modesty. All are aggressive, ambitious, and devoted to the advancement of the sect, although the aims and desires of that sect as portrayed in the play seem harmless enough. It is true that the author accuses the Philosophes of having raised their voice against inquisitions merely to enable themselves to be persecutors in their turn, and he later suggests that serious consequences may arise from their doctrines, but he lacks the conviction of Palissot, and his play falls into the same class as *Les huit Philosophes* of Mainvilliers.

After all, Rutlidge, in 1777, was behind his time, and the public, which in 1760 had found Palissot's satire amusing, must have found the *Bureau d'esprit* boring. Moreover, the public since Palissot's play had been trained to look with disfavor upon personal satire, so that it was not likely to show any enthusiasm for the scandalous allusions of a mediocre playwright. When, in 1782, Palissot's play was revived, it was received with meagre enthusiasm, and in the last scene the sight of Crispin entering upon the stage on all fours evoked such a protest from the audience that the curtain had to be lowered to avoid a riot.[1] The fashion was changing, and Rutlidge did not realize it. There was a slight flurry over his play. D'Alembert wrote to Voltaire:[2] "Croiriez-vous que je ne sais quelle canaille vient de faire imprimer une comédie intitulée

1. Delafarge, *op. cit.*, p. 419-20.
2. Moland edition, Vol. L, pp. 135.

Bureau d'esprit, où cette pauvre femme mourante est fort nigrée, à la vérité si platement que cela ne se peut lire?" achaumont also condemned it. Even Palissot[1] looked with nall favor upon the comedy, "qui n'est, à la rigueur encore, l'une imitation de celle des Philosophes." Then the flurry bsided and *Le Bureau d'esprit* quietly took its place in the nks of forgotten plays.

With *Le Bureau d'esprit*, the effort to present well-known ilosophes upon the stage and to hold them up to ridicule ased. What had it accomplished? With the exclusion of utlidge's comedy, which is a late-comer, this second phase n its short-lived course in the eight years between 1752-, and only once was it marked by a brilliant success. evertheless, in the period in question there were presented the public twenty-six Philosophes more or less successfully entified as Marivaux, Mouhi, Montesquieu, Prévost, Main-lliers, D'Argens, Voltaire, Maupertuis, Crébillon, Rousseau, derot, Helvétius, Duclos, Madame d'Epinay, M^lle^ Clairon, adame Geoffrin, La Harpe, Marmontel, Cadet, Thomas, rnaud, D'Alembert, Capperonnier, Condorcet, Holbach, acquer. Of the individuals presented, the most harshly treat- were Rousseau, Helvétius, Diderot, D'Alembert, La Harpe d Voltaire. Of this half-dozen, Rousseau and Diderot suffered e most, although the characterisation of no Philosophe is lly fair.

This phase of the quarrel, though brief, was the one which oused the ire as well as the apprehension of the Philosophes, d it might have been their undoing, had not D'Alembert ted so quickly. He was the first to realize the danger which enaced the party if the opposition should be permitted to dicule upon the stage the individuals of the encyclopedic oup. He saw at once that the public would be on the side those who could furnish it the most amusement. Consequent-, in 1755 he hastened, in an effort to save the situation, to e defense of Rousseau.

1. *Journal français de Palissot et Clément*, No. VII, 15 avril 1777, 322.

His argument, of course, could not be that the Philosoph was beyond the satire of the playwright. And so he stresse the impropriety of presenting respectable citizens to the rid cule of the public. At the instigation of d'Alembert, Tressa wrote to Stanislas: "Ceux qui sont aujourd'hui à la tête de lettres, de l'aveu de tous les gens qui pensent, regardent comm un attentat d'avoir essayé de tourner en ridicule un citoye généralement estimé."[1]

Palissot replied that he could find in previous plays ampl justification for his use of personal satire. To Stanislas h wrote: "On m'accuse d'avoir compromis l'honneur d'u citoyen de Genève, comme si j'avais attaqué sa probité, o ses mœurs. On affecte d'oublier que le même citoyen ou plutô ses paradoxes singuliers que votre Majesté a combattus ave des raisons ont été plus d'une fois livrés au ridicule sur le Théâtres de Paris." To M. Thibault, the chief of police a Nancy, he cited a long list of plays which had ridiculed som person or coterie: *Les Femmes savantes* had ridiculed the Hôte de Rambouillet and Cotin and Ménage; *Tartuffe*, a whol class of people; *Le Misanthrope*, Montausier; *L'Impromptu de Versailles*, Boursault; *Les Fâcheux*, an individual whom Palissot can not name; *La Nouveauté*, l'abbé Pélegrin; whil *La Comtesse d'Escarbagnas*, *Les Plaideurs*, and *La Métro manie* each contain reference to anecdotes which were curren at the time. To this list, Palissot added the entire productio of Dancourt, several "vaudevilles" of De Boissy, and th majority of the plays of Destouches.

Thus Palissot attempted to justify himself by Molière, D Boissy, Destouches and Dancourt. How much justificatio could he have found in the plays presented between 1700 an 1755? Certain plays had been presented with the expres purpose of satirizing movements: *Arlequin défenseur d'Homè* referred to the quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns; *L Régiment de la Calotte* referred to that organization; *L*

1. D'Alembert, *Œuvres*, Vol. V, p. 385.

ventures de la rue Quincampoix grew out of the scheme of ohn Law; the quarrel between Jesuit and Jansenist gave rise o *La Femme docteur*, *Arlequin Janséniste*, and *Le Saint éniché*; similarly, the quarrel between the Faculties of Medicine and Surgery gave rise to *La Faculté vengée*. In this group f plays, all, save *La Faculté vengée*, were free from personal atire, although certain allusions could apply only to definite ndividuals. Some other plays seized upon widely-known incients in the construction of their plot. Thus *Le Contraste de amour et de l'hymen* was constructed on an anecdote related f Rémon and his wife; *Le Trio comique* and *Le Triomphe e l'intérêt* related the escapades of a M^lle^ Pellissier and a Jew; *e nouveau Tarquin* grew out of a law-suit of the two esuits Girard and La Cadière; La Chaussée's *Préjugé à la ode* took its plot from an anecdote concerning the Duc de ichelieu; finally, *La Métromanie* sprang from a prank played pon Fontenelle, La Motte, and Destouches. Similarly, the artouche plays had their origin in the arrest of that famous andit. In this whole group of plays, however, there was none ritten with the intent of giving offense, the authors being esirous only of enhancing the realism of their plays with nteresting anecdotes. There was, however, a group which id attack personal reputations. The following list includes ne titles of the plays and the name of the person to whom llusions are made: *Oedipe* is said to contain an allusion to ne Regent; *Momus fabuliste* refers unquestionably to the oems of La Motte; *Le triple Mariage* refers to Saint Alausse; *'Actrice nouvelle* is said to be Adrienne Lecouvreur; *Le Tour de carnaval* referred to Chévrier; and *Le faux Savant* nade allusions to Dupuis. Voltaire was satirized in *Le Temple*, nd again in *Momus fabuliste*. There were allusions to Le age and D'Orneval in *Philomèle*, to Le Sage alone in *Arlequin Pigmalion*, to Chauvelin in *L'Ambitieux*, and possibly o Maurepas and D'Ayen in *Le Méchant*. Helvétius recognized is own portrait in *Le Philosophe marié*.[1]

1. This paragraph is a brief summary of the first hundred pages of esnoiresterres, G., *La Comédie satirique en France au XVIII^e^ siècle.*

If this list is added to that given by Palissot in his letter to M. Thibault and if the circumstances attendant upon each play are examined carefully, it will be found that the only plays which could be reasonably cited by Palissot as a justification for his personal satire are *Les Femmes savantes*, *L'Impromptu de Versailles*, *La Faculté vengée*, and *Philomèle*. The other plays as a rule contained merely one or two lines referring to some personal incident, the remaining parts being devoted to an entirely different theme; two of the plays, *Le Misanthrope* and *Le Philosophe marié*, have always been associated with certain individuals, but these individuals served only as a basis for the portrayal of a group. Hence Palissot's justification hinges upon four plays, two of them by Molière. Concerning the Molière plays, Fréron's periodical, *L'Année littéraire*,[1] refused to see in them a justification for Palissot: "Les fautes où ce grand homme a pu tomber, soit par la faiblesse de la nature humaine, soit par la liberté qui régnait de son temps, ne sont pas des titres pour ses successeurs." With the elimination of Molière's plays, there remained two mediocre examples, neither of which is fully analogous to the plays against the Philosophes.

The case of Palissot and his followers may, therefore, be said to be new in the annals of the French stage. Never before had contemporaries been dragged out so mercilessly before the public eye. For a parallel, the critics were forced to go back to *The Clouds* of Aristophanes, and even there Palissot could not find much consolation, since eighteenth-century public opinion favored Socrates rather than his persecutor.

There was a lively protest from the general public, fostered, it is true, by the Philosophes. The risks involved in permitting playwrights such licence could be readily grasped. If they should be granted permission to ridicule the most worthy citizens, who could be sure that, one day, he would not be brought upon the stage and set before a jeering public? The

1. *L'Année littéraire*, 1760, Vol. IV, p. 220.

ostility to such a procedure grew, so that Barbier somewhat ater could write of *Les Philosophes*:[1] "Elle est critiquée uant à la pièce et fort condamnée pour la méchanceté." The isapproval noted by Barbier persisted, and throughout the entury the public never permitted a return to personalities. When, in 1782, the *Philosophes* was revived, Dortidius had ecome Marphurius, and before the second performance its inal scene had to be revised; and even then the revival was hort-lived.

The public would not tolerate the presentation of the indiidual Philosophe, but it had no objection to the presentation f the individual's doctrine. Moreover, the doctrine of Rousseau r of Helvétius gave rise to a supply of catch-phrases that ffered tempting stage-material, and play after play appeared ontaining allusions to the works of Rousseau, Helvétius, Diderot, and others, without arousing the hostility of the ublic. Between such a procedure and the presentation of Fréron as Mr. Wasp or Diderot as Dortidius, there was a reat difference. The quarrel had passed from personalities to octrines.

1. Barbier, *Journal*, Vol. IV, p. 347.

CHAPTER IV

THE "PHILOSOPHE A LA MODE" (1760-1800).

The criticism launched against specific representatives of the Philosophic Party gradually yielded to a more impersonal criticism directed against their teachings. Three causes contributed to this: certain of the Philosophes, in an effort to defend their personal integrity,[1] waged a vigorous campaign against the aggressors; the public, following its conservative inclinations, looked with disfavor upon personal satire; but the most important element in bringing about the change was the diversity in the species of Philosophes. There were now "sous-," "soi-disants," "apprentis," and "valets." Grimm wrote in 1760: "Nous sommes condamnés, au moins pour dix-huit mois, à n'entendre parler que de philosophie et de Philosophes." With this complexity, effective choice of representative individuals as a butt for ridicule became increasingly difficult.

The criticism of individuals was accordingly abandoned in favor of the previous device of criticizing systems and doctrines, but in a modified form. Instead of analyzing a whole system, various writers, hostile to the philosophic movement, selected certain works from which they extracted for discussion principles considered by them as representative. The works most frequently chosen were the six following: *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*, *Essai sur l'inégalité*, *Dictionnaire philosophique*, *l'Interprétation de la nature*, *l'Encyclopédie*, and *De l'Esprit*. The *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* evoked at least ten replies,[2] eight of them almost immediate; the *Dic*

1. See *infra*, Chapter VII, and Delafarge, *Palissot, sa vie et son œuvre*
2. Quérard, *La France littéraire*.

onnaire philosophique, seven;[1] the *Discours sur l'inégalité*, velve;[2] but the most bitterly attacked work of the six was elvétius' *De l'esprit*,[3] around which centred the whole battle. or some reason it was felt that the doctrine of self-interest as the nucleus of all the others and contained the principles ost menacing to established institutions.

Helvétius' treatise, published in 1758, was divided into ur discourses, the second of which contained the doctrine self-interest. The author opened this part of his work with discussion of the moral side of life, and there he plainly nounced his thesis:[4] "Pour faire sentir combien cette manière considérer l'esprit est féconde en vérités, je ferai successiement l'application des principes que j'établis aux actions aux idées des hommes, et je prouverai qu'en tout temps, tout lieu, tant en matière de morale qu'en matière d'esprit, est l'intérêt personnel qui dicte le jugement des particuliers, l'intérêt général qui dicte celui des nations; qu'ainsi c'est ujours, de la part du public comme des particuliers, mour ou la reconnaissance qui loue, la haine ou la vengance qui méprise." Furthermore, stated the author, when ere is a clash between the interest of the individual and at of the group, there are few individuals who consent to crifice the former to the latter.

To prove this doctrine, Helvétius considered it in the relaons of (1) man to man, (2) man to a small group of individuals, (3) man to a nation, (4) man to preceding ages or to an dividual of a different country, and (5) man to the universe. t the end of his study, he stated his conclusion in the same rms in which he had stated the aim of his work:[5] "La nclusion de ce discours, c'est que tant en matière d'esprit u'en matière de morale, c'est toujours de la part des hommes

1. Quérard, *La France littéraire.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. Keim, A., *Helvétius, sa vie et son œuvre* (1907), Chapters xv and xi.
4. Ed. Lepetit, Paris, 1818, p. 45.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 228.

l'amour ou la reconnaissance qui loue, la haine ou la ven geance qui méprise. L'intérêt est donc le seul dispensateur d leur estime; l'esprit, sous quelque point de vue qu'on le consi dère, n'est donc jamais qu'un assemblage d'idées neuves intéressantes, et par conséquent utiles aux hommes, soi comme instructives, soit comme agréables."

The doctrine of self-interest was condemned on all sides Grimm noted the flurry:[1] "Cet ouvrage a causé dans le publi un soulèvement général; les dévots et les gens du monde s sont également déchaînés contre lui: le livre a été supprimé.. comme scandaleux, licencieux, dangereux." Madame du Def fand is said to have exclaimed: "C'est un homme qui a dit l secret de tout le monde." Even the Philosophes found man questionable statements in the work. Turgot wrote to Con dorcet: "Il est faux que l'intérêt soit l'unique principe qu fait agir les hommes." Voltaire[2] wrote to Helvétius criticizin the point of view of the work. Rousseau started to write *Réfutation du livre "De l'Esprit,"* which seems never to hav passed beyond the stage of annotations on the margin of hi own personal copy.[3] Finally, Diderot wrote his *Réflexion sur le livre "De l'Esprit,"*[4] in which he treated severely Hel vétius' paradoxes. But the most serious opposition came fron the church party. The *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, the *Journa de Trévoux*, and the *Journal chrétien* all published refuta tions.[5] Since Helvétius was, after all, a Philosophe, thos who saw in the growth of the new philosophy a menace t established institutions pointed out his doctrine as a concret example of the extremes to which the new philosophy wa prepared to go.

The change in the method of attack noted for the treatises pamphlets, and periodicals of the time can be seen also in th

1. Grimm, *Correspondance*, Vol. IV, p. 29.
2. Ed. Moland, Vol. XXXIX, p. 552.
3. Ed. Hachette, Vol. III, p. 122 ; Vol. XII, p. 198.
4. Ed. Tourneux, Vol. II, p. 267.
5. Belin, J., *Le Mouvement philosophique en France* (1913), p. 12

drama. When it became no longer feasible to assail the individual, a number of playwrights adopted the method of assailing doctrines. Since it was manifestly impossible to present upon the stage systems of philosophy in entirety, these playwrights contented themselves with brief summaries. Realizing their inferiority to the pamphleteers even in this respect, they analyzed with more thoroughness the character of those who expounded or espoused such theories, traced carefully the diffusion of the new ideas and recorded the results derived therefrom. The doctrine which is invariably mentioned in this group of plays is that of Helvétius, to which are added snatches from Rousseau's ideas on the decline of civilization, from Diderot's theory of the mechanical structure of nature, and from Voltaire's doctrine of deism.

In all, nine plays contain an exposition of the ideas of Helvétius, Rousseau, Diderot and Voltaire. Palissot's *Les Philosophes* gave an account of the doctrine of the decline of civilization. *Le Sage ou le Philosophe du jour*, *Les Philosophes de bois*, *Les Courtisannes*, *L'Homme dangereux*, *Le Séducteur*, and *Le Valet Philosophe* directed criticisms against the doctrine of self-interest. On the other hand, *Le petit Philosophe* criticized Rousseau's system of philosophy and that of Helvétius, and *La Nouvelle philosophie à vau l'eau* attacked the principles of Voltaire and Diderot as well as those of Rousseau and Helvétius.

Les Philosophes of Palissot was presented on May 2, 1760. By the 24th of June, the Comédie Italienne was rehearsing Poinsinet's[1] *Le petit Philosophe*,[2] a parody of Palissot's play, but there was considerable difficulty in obtaining permission

1. Poinsinet was a cousin of Palissot's brother-in-law. Favart attributed the play to Palissot. See *Correspondance*, Vol. I, p. 53: "Négligences affectées pour faire croire à ce que l'on dit, que l'ouvrage est de Poinsinet; car on soutient qu'il est de Palissot." Favart is supported by Grimm, *Correspondance*, Vol. IV, p. 267.

2. *Le Petit Philosophe*, comédie en un acte et en vers libres, représentée par les comédiens Italiens le 14 juillet, 1760. Chez Prault petit-fils, avec approbation et permission. Bib. Nat. Yth 13909, and Harvard University Library.

to stage it,[1] so that it was not presented until the 14th of July. Evidently the authorities were opposed to the performance, fearing a repetition of the disturbance which had accompanied Palissot's play.

Poinsinet, in his preface, expressed approval of Palissot's point of view, although he condemned the personal nature of his satire. He, too, holds the opinion that there is a real danger arising from certain writings: "Tel respect que doivent inspirer les grands ouvrages, on ne peut nier que dans nombre d'écrits modernes il ne se soit glissé des maximes également contraires aux lois, aux mœurs, et aux usages, qui cependant ont séduit quelques esprits, et produit des prosélites." The specific work which he is inclined to regard as the most dangerous is an essay on the utility of the sciences and the arts, a work in which "il s'agit de leurs [*i.e.*, the public's] mœurs, et ce nouveau combat doit intéresser tous les honnêtes gens." There are, moreover, doctrines which Poinsinet has in view, but does not name, although he states that he has attempted to combat them in his play.

The play treats of the selfishness of Damon the Philosophe, and of its inevitable consequences. This man, who for six years has remained away from home without sending back so much as a letter, who suddenly returns to the place of his birth without any display of sentiment, who refuses to be embraced by his parents because it is an unnecessary manifestation of the emotions, who criticizes his father for having given up to him the best room in the house, who puts his gains in "rentes viagères" without a thought for his family, who rejects the bonds of matrimony because they curtail his liberty, and who refuses to visit the lord of the vil-

1. Favart to Durazzo, June 24, 1760. *Correspondance*, Vol. I, p. 50. On June 24th, Favart informed Durazzo that *Les Petits Philosophes* (*sic*), "suite de l'acharnement contre nos philosophes modernes," had been rehearsed several times; but that the police had stopped it. On July 4, he mentioned that the ban was still on. Finally, on the 20th of July, he announced that the play had been performed four times and had failed.

ge because such a visit diminishes his independence, is, like arcisse, essentially an egotist possessing dangerous ideas volved from his egotism. After all, he is but an exponent of ie doctrine of personal interest, just as was Narcisse.

Le petit Philosophe was performed four times at the Comé-ie Italienne; *Le Sage ou le Philosophe du jour*[1] was appar-ntly never presented upon any stage. The work went to ress three days before the first performance of the *Phi-osophes*, but it was withdrawn "par l'académicien qui l'avait pprouvé." Later in the year 1760, however, it was published y a friend who addressed in the introduction a eulogy to he author.[2] Its plot, like that of *Le petit Philosophe*, is built round the return of a son fired by enthusiasm for the new hilosophy. In *Le Sage*, the son is the Marquis d'Alvalence vho has quit Paris in order to pursue his study of philosophy nder the guidance of a "lettré de Genève." At Geneva, he as met a scheming baroness who, desirous of securing his vealth, pampers his extravagant ideas. He returns to Paris vith her, ignores his mother, abandons his fiancée, and plans o turn the world into confusion, when he suddenly becomes

1. *Le Sage ou le Philosophe du jour*, comédie en cinq actes et en ers de dix syllabes, with the epigraph: "L'homme sera connu par sa octrine; mais celui qui est vain et n'a pas de sens tombera dans le népris. Prov. S." A la Haye, MDCCLX. Mentioned in Brunet and in oleinne, No. 2951. A copy of the play can be found at the Bibliothèque oyale de Belgique II 28849, Vol. 56, No. 536. Attributed by the Biblio-hèque Royale to La Merlière.

2. "O vous l'Auteur, lorsque vous verres cet essai de votre plume, mprimé sans votre aveu, ne prenes pas la peine de vous justifier. On ait comment et pourquoi trois jours avant la représentation des *Phi-osophes*, votre Drame fut rappellé de la Presse par l'académicien qui avait approuvé; et comment vous aves répondu à des personnes puis-antes, qui voulaient vous faire enfreindre les Loix de l'obéissance; et omment vous avez sacrifié sans murmure les fruits de vos veilles, et e votre courage. Ne vous lassez jamais d'être discret, soumis et res-ectueux, quand même vos nouvelles entreprises contre la fausse Phi-osophie, seraient encore proscrites: Cette modération, précieuse à otre âge, vous fera des amis solides, parce que, de même qu'on ne ougit pas de protéger des esprits contagieux, il faut ne pas rougir 'encourager le petit nombre de ceux qui ne craignent pas d'écrire ans ces temps orageux pour la Religion, les Mœurs et le Gouverne-nent; comme vous aves fajt d'une manière frappante."

aware of the irrelevancy of his conduct. Thereupon he repents abjures his newly-acquired philosophy, and obtains pardon from his mother and from his fiancée.

On July 20th of the same year, there was presented by the marionettes at Passy *Les Philosophes de bois,*[1] signed by a Cadet de Beaupré, director of the marionettes at Passy, but now attributed to Poinsinet de Sivry.[2] In a foreword, the author disclaims any intention of recommencing the quarrel. In fact, he expresses the desire that the play, "fait sans méchanceté," should bring the quarrel to an end. Thereby, he avers, he will have done much for the honor of men of letters.[3] But, in spite of these protestations of neutrality, Poinsinet de Sivry does not keep a neutral position. He calls the language of the Philosophes a "jargon," considers the desire to become a member of the sect "une marotte,"[4] speaks of their "masque,"[5] and holds the term Philosophe attributed to an honest Gilles "une injure."[6] He defines philosophy by the mouth of M. Fagot as follows:[7]

1. *Les Philosophes de bois*, comédie en un acte en vers, par Mr. Cade de Beaupré, membre de plusieurs troupes, et directeur des comédiens artificiels de Passy. Représentée pour la première fois sur son théâtre le 20 juillet, 1760. Ridere non laedere. Paris, chez Vallard, imprimeur du Roi, rue Saint Jean de Beauvais, à Sainte Cécile. MDCCLX. Avec approbation et permission. Bib. Nat., 8° Yth, 14157.

Concerning the title of this play, Cf. Collé, *Journal historique*, Vol. II p. 231: " Il faut que je peigne à la turque les Philosophes de ce temps ci. Ces bougres-là ont fait tomber la presse de la rue de la Huchette où l'on imprime nos chansons. A mon tour je veux casser le cou à leu Cyclopédie en faisant une parade sous le titre de *Polichinelle Philosophe ou le Philosophe de Bois de Noyer.*" Collé's article is dated Apri 30, 1760. See D'Alméras et D'Estrée, *Les Théâtres libertins au XVIII^e siècle.*

2. Attributed by Grimm, *Correspondance*, Vol. IX, p. 305, to Bertin Favart, however, in his *Correspondance*, Vol. I, p. 69, stated tha "M. Bertin de Blagny, receveur-général des parties casuelles, est l protecteur de ce théâtre." According to Favart, Poinsinet de Sivry i the author. Quérard followed Favart. Poinsinet de Sivry was the broth er-in-law of Palissot and cousin of the author of *Le petit Philosophe.*

3. *Les Philosophes de bois*, p. 3.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Il faut te souvenir que la philosophie
Est presqu'en tout semblable à la maçonnerie.
Le plus ou le moins de talents
Nous est indifférent chez celui qui postule,
Et chez nous on reçoit tous les honnêtes gens
Quand ils n'ont point trop de scrupule.

To treat the Philosophes as blockheads, to name them fter trees (M. Sapin, M. Durchêne, M. Dusaule), and to ana-yze their character after the manner of a carpenter analyzing ne nature of a wood is anything but complimentary. M. Fagot as a system "qui fera souche," especially if enveloped in a style inextricable." He is supported by M. Sapin who auds his system to the skies in exchange for unlimited praise rom M. Fagot: "Il est bien doux de s'entrepasser la ouange."[1] They have two colleagues: M. Durchêne, a veri-able wizard in the field of knowledge:[2]

Quelle charpente il vous a dans l'esprit!
Comme il dit tout ce qu'on a dit!
Et que solidement il bâtit un système,
Il n'en démord jamais, et c'est ce que j'en aime,

nd his partner, M. Dusaule: "souple et facile à plier, il anque de roideur." M. Fagot and Sapin talk like Helvétius nd Diderot.[3] M. Durchêne and M. Dusaule are suspiciously ke D'Alembert and Rousseau. At all events, the "quatre attes" scene is repeated by Madame Gigogne, who recites alissot's travesty on the *Discours sur l'inégalité*; and the *Fils naturel*, the *Père de famille*, and the *Maximes d'un sage* eceive special mention.

At some time during the period of struggle (possibly be-

1. *Les Philosophes de bois*, p. 8.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
3. Desnoiresterres, G., *La Comédie satirique en France.*(1885), p. 133. Desnoiresterres asserts that Diderot is designated under the name of M. Fagot because he had once boasted of having destroyed a forest of prejudices, and some one is said to have replied: "C'est pour cela que vous nous comptez tant de fagots."

tween 1760 and 1770,[1] when anglomania was at its height), the Abbé Radonvilliers[2] composed his *Crispin Philosophe* or *Le Valet Philosophe*.[3] An incident which occurred in *Le Philosophe à la mode* forms the plot of the play. Eraste, friend of Anselme and of Cléante, seeks their assistance in a lawsuit. Anselme promises aid and instructs Cléante, his nephew, to keep him informed. Cléante, however, is a Philosophe; consequently, he puts the matter into the hands of his valet, who, being a Philosophe also, puts the matter into the hands of another servant. Thereby the suit is lost.

The plot of *Crispin Philosophe* is of secondary importance, the greater part of the interest being centred in the conversations between Anselme and his nephew Cléante or between

1. Duval, No. 2410, mentioned a *Crispin philosophe*, "un acte, prose (Ms. vers 1640), BN Y5546 IV 65." This is apparently the play of Radonvilliers. The date 1640 is probably intended for 1740. It is known that Radonvilliers was writing plays around 1740. Cf. *Biog. Univ.*: "Il avait composé, en 1740, une comédie intitulée *Les Talents inutiles*, qui fut jouée avec succès par les élèves du collège de Louis-le-Grand, mais, ou cette pièce s'est perdue avec la plupart des Mss de Radonvilliers ou bien son éditeur ne l'a pas jugée digne de figurer dans l'édition de ses *Œuvres*."

2. Radonvilliers, C. F. L. de (1709-1789), was a student of Père Porée, one of the famous playwrights among the Jesuit fathers. Radonvilliers taught in a Jesuit school, but resigned to become secretary to Cardinal La Rochefoucauld. Later, he became assistant instructor to the children of Louis XV. Under Louis XVI, he was named Counsellor of State. In 1763, he was appointed to succeed Marivaux in the French Academy. He seemed to arouse the especial animosity of D'Alembert, who wrote to Voltaire: "Vous ignorez encore plus que ces libelles, et surtout le Sieur Clément, un de leurs principaux auteurs, sont prônés et protégés par tous les Tartuffes de Versailles, entre autres par un abbé de Radonvilliers notre digne confrère, qui ressemble à Tartufe comme son espion de valet Batteux ressemble à Laurent." Voltaire, ed. Moland, Vol. XLVIII, p. 255.

3. The play was apparently never printed; at all events, I have found no mention of it in the repertories of printed plays. There is a *Valet Philosophe* printed in 1805, comedy in three acts in prose, by the Marquis de Maisonfort. This play is mentioned by Duval, No. 9402, and Soleinne, No. 3202. Of the former *Valet Philosophe*, however, two manuscripts are known: Bib. Nat., Nouv. Ac. Fr., Nos. 1262 and 15086. There was evidently some confusion in the title. On the title page of 1262, *Le Valet Philosophe* has been scratched out and *Crispin Philosophe* substituted. The page following retained the old title *Le Valet Philosophe*.

Cléante and his valet Crispin. Similarly, in *La nouvelle Philosophie à vau l'eau ou le Philosophe du temps*,[1] published at Amsterdam in 1775, the plot is subordinated to the dialogue. Jérôme, a boatman, meets, on the occasion of the passage of the king at Passy, Toupet, who attempts to convert him to the new philosophy and all but succeeds, when Bonsens engages in the conversation and puts Toupet to rout. They all go to Passy, where the appearance of the king so dazes the Philosophe that he abjures his philosophy and promises to live as a good Christian and a good citizen.

In the preface of the *Nouvelle Philosophie*, the author tells how the new philosophy sprang up beside the old respected philosophy. Its growth proved harmful and many philosophers rose in protest against the indignity which was heaped upon their good name by the public. Fortunately their protest was heard, for the foremost personages in the kingdom strove to aid them to regain their lost prestige; and the magistrates lent them the authority of their office in an effort to annihilate the new philosophy. Nothing remains now to be done, save to undeceive the common people who either have become alarmed at the new doctrines and disgusted with all philosophy, or who have been attracted by the new theories and carried away by their application. Hence, the object of the play: "Je tâche, dans cet écrit, de désabuser les uns, et d'instruire les autres. Si je m'attache davantage à montrer la noirceur de la fausse philosophie, c'est qu'il est très difficile d'arracher une erreur qui fait tous les jours de nouveaux progrès, au lieu qu'il suffit que le vulgaire sache qu'il y a une vraie philosophie pour calmer ses alarmes."

With the publication of *La nouvelle Philosophie*, the direct attack against doctrines came to an end. There were still produced several comedies which had in their cast of characters an individual who followed the doctrine of personal in-

1. *La nouvelle Philosophie à vau-l'eau ou le Philosophe du temps, confondu par la présence du Roi*, dialogue Moral par M. Duval. A Amsterdam et se trouve à Paris, 1775. Bib. Nat., R. 11536.

terest and was guilty of moral turpitude, but the leading character of each of these comedies was taken from some other social group of the time. Though these plays are not primarily Philosophe plays, they nevertheless show an interesting evolution of that individual. In the works previously treated in this chapter, he has a pretence of respectability; in these plays, he has thrown away even the semblance of it and mingles with the scum of society. In *Les Courtisannes*,[1] he is the aider and abetter of the underworld: M. Sophanès promotes the welfare of Rosalie, the courtisan, in the hope of providing for his old age. In *L'Homme dangereux*,[2] the character is more odious still, being a mephistophelian mischief-maker for the sole pleasure of creating evil. Having won the affection of Oronte, Valère the Philosophe seeks to obtain the hand of Julie, Oronte's ward, by slandering her lover Dorante. Finally, in *Le Séducteur*,[3] Zéronès the Philosophe

1. *Les Courtisannes ou l'École des mœurs*, comédie par l'auteur de la comédie des Philosophes. "Ne remarquez-vous pas qu'on nous respecte, nous?" A Paris, chez Moutard, librairie de la Reine, de M^me^ et de M^me^ la Comtesse D'Artois. Quai des Augustins. MDCCLXXV. Avec approbation et permission.

Palissot's comedy was refused by the Comédiens of the Comédie Française as "peu compatible, par son extrême indécence, avec la dignité du Théâtre Français." But Palissot suspected that the opposition came from the Philosophes, who resented the character attributed to Sophanès, the Philosophe of the play. See *Œuvres*, Vol. V, p. 133. At all events, certain of the Philosophes saw in the play another attack against the sect. Grimm, *Correspondance*, Vol. XI.

2. *L'Homme dangereux*, comédie par l'auteur de la comédie des Philosophes. "Semper ego auditor tantum, numquamque reponam, vexatus toties?" A Amsterdam. MDCCLXXVII.

The play, already written in 1770, is a poor imitation of Gresset's *Méchant*. It was intended as a trap for the Philosophes, but the Abbé Voisenon gave away the secret and certain passages had to be changed to save the author from ridicule. Once more, Palissot failed to obtain permission for the presenting of his play on account of the machinations of the Philosophes. For details of this quarrel, see Delafarge, *op. cit.*, pp. 310ff.

3. *Le Séducteur*, comédie en cinq actes et en vers. Paris, Prault, 1783. Seconde édition, 1784. Représentée à Fontainebleau devant Sa Majesté le 4 novembre, 1783, et à Paris, le 7 du même mois. Par M. le Marquis de Bièvre.

The play was composed before August, 1788. See Seconde éd., Pré-

valet to a marquis who is endeavoring to seduce Rosalie the hope of obtaining the wealth of Orgon, her father.[1] The Philosophes in all the foregoing plays are descendants Narcisse in *Le Philosophe à la mode*. Damon, in *Le petit hilosophe*, is essentially an egotist, and an exponent of the octrine of self-interest. His condemnation of the emotions, s avarice, his lack of filial piety, his desire for liberty, his tack upon society, all spring from his selfishness. A compar-on between him and Narcisse reveals striking resemblances. he latter had taught his valet Frontin that the Philosophe is rbidden by the laws of philosophy to take an interest in hers; Damon exclaims when his father shows him the room e has vacated to make him more confortable:

> Vous vous gênez, pour prix de votre attention
> Il faudra qu'à mon tour je me gêne.

nother of Narcisse's characteristics was his lack of filial piety; amon refuses an embrace from his mother after a separation six years. Narcisse expressed scorn for the fatherland, find-g that "la première patrie est au fond de notre âme"; amon voices the same scorn:[2]

ce, p. iii n. Palissot was accused by some of having collaborated th Bièvre in the production of the play. There was considerable oppo-ion among the Philosophes to the character Zéronès. See Grimm, *orrespondance*, Vol. XIII, p. 390 and p. 464: "Quant à Zéronès, M. Palis-t a déjà essayé plusieurs fois de mettre ce caractère sur la scène; aité par un génie véritablement comique il offrirait sans doute une blime leçon... Il est d'ailleurs d'une bêtise si plate, que nous ne ouvons nous dispenser en conscience d'assurer ici qu'aucun de nos ilosophes n'a pu servir de modèle à ce rôle."

1. The theme of *Le Séducteur* is repeated in Mme de Passow's *Amour hilosophe*, where Amour assumes the rôle of a Philosophe in order to snare Diana. In the play of Mme de Passow, all of the characters are ds, but the intention of criticizing the new mania for philosophy and e abuses to which it would lead is none the less evident. The play as translated from the Norwegian by Sauvigny, who published it, in 73, in the *Parnasse des Dames*, B. N., Ye 12449.

Other plays belonging to this division were published at a much ter date. See *infra*, Chapter VII, end.

2. *Le petit Philosophe*, p. 37.

Ma patrie est aux lieux où je me trouve bien;
C'est du monde Idéal que je suis citoyen.

Narcisse deduced also that every man is under obligatio to himself only, and that "ce premier devoir doit domine sur tous"; Damon has the same selfish idea of friendship calling it "un être vraiment fantastique, par l'indolence ima giné." Narcisse warned Menippe against the display of sen timent; Damon is equally prejudiced against it:[1]

Un beau sentiment doit être concentré;
Comme il prend naissance dans l'âme,
Par la raison, il veut être épuré,
Dès qu'il éclate trop, il devient populaire.
Et ces transports si vifs, ces longs embrassements,
Sont bons pour amuser l'imbécile vulgaire,
Qui n'est heureux qu'autant qu'il fait jouir ses sens.

Narcisse was studious; Damon's readings embrace Celsius Lucretius, Spinoza, Teliamed, Baile, Baldus, Sextus Empiri cus, Hobbes, and Crassus. Narcisse indulged in unlimite criticism of the faults of others; Damon finds that the vices o others far outweigh their virtues. And lastly, Narcisse wa making converts to his selfish philosophy; Damon no soone returns home than he attempts to convert his father, his fian cée and his friend. In spite of these resemblances, Damon i a more recent type of Philosophe than Narcisse. Forty year did not prevent a fundamental similarity in their character but forty years had brought to light Helvétius' *De l'Espri* and Rousseau's *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* and *Essa sur l'inégalité*. Thus Narcisse represents a type of Philosoph prevalent not only for 1720, but for 1760 as well; yet wit the difference that Damon has not merely inherited from Nar cisse, he has made acquisitions also from the works of hi own time.

Cléante, of *Crispin Philosophe*, is of the same type a

1. *Le petit Philosophe*, p. 26.

Damon; that is to say, he is occupied only with the care of himself, or rather occupies himself with avoiding all cares. He greatly likes his friends, but he prefers the tranquillity of his own mind to their welfare. Accordingly, when Eraste seeks him with the greatest urgence in order to be presented to his judges, Cléante instructs his valet to ascertain whether such a move is absolutely necessary. Putting off this act of friendship until it is too late, he makes plans for a pleasure trip to the country where he intends to stay five or six days. In short, Cléante is another Narcisse. He began by being detached from amusements compatible with his age; now he scorns them more than ever. His valet calls him a first-class Philosophe. This does not mean, however, that he is a profound thinker, for he has read only the novels of the day. Nor does it mean that he lives a retired, secluded life, for he has severed only such social bonds as bored him. Nor, finally, does it mean that he has become meditative or thoughtful: thinking is a tiresome activity which costs effort, and he will have none of it.

The fundamental characteristic of Damon and of Cléante is selfishness. D'Alvalence, of *Le Sage*, also has much of this selfishness. He has no regard for his mother, no respect for old age, no reverence for time-honored institutions. Friendship to him is a myth; love, a weakness; honor, a folly. But the guiding principle of all his activity is glory. In this respect he is distinguishable from Damon and Narcisse, individuals to a great extent inactive. D'Alvalence is more endowed with the missionary spirit: his task is to make proselytes and he spares no methods whereby they can be made. Discovering that dress is a great factor in attracting women to philosophy, he immediately adopts an elegant costume:[1]

> Donnons à la science
> L'air important, les pompons, l'élégance,
> Promenons-la couverte de rubis,

1. *Le Sage*, p. 26.

Et je la tiens l'idole de Paris.
Oui, que d'abord, pour arriver aux belles,
Tout philosophe adopte les dentelles.

Nor does his missionary spirit stop at converting the fair sex: the whole world must be made safe for philosophy. Letters are sent to Pekin, London, and the Netherlands, and exhortations to Kaffirs, Pongos, and Hurons.

This spirit of proselytism is further emphasized in Toupet of *La nouvelle Philosophie*, though his motive is the desire not for glory but for independence. Toupet is further distinguishable from Damon, Cléante, and D'Alvalence in that he is insincere. Knowing that his doctrine is false, he still goes forth to incite to revolution all who are so foolish as to listen to his words. In a long speech, he declares his creed and aim:[1] "Tenons-nous, toutes vos dissertations m'ennuient, et n'espérez pas me convaincre, car nous sommes résolus de ne répondre aux choses les plus claires que par des turlupinades, des railleries et des sarcasmes, parce que si nous admettions un être suprême, une âme immortelle, une vie future, cela gênerait l'envie que nous avons de satisfaire à toutes nos passions, et puisqu'il faut vous l'avouer, je lève le masque, et je vous déclare que notre devise est l'indépendance: en conséquence, nous nous déclarons ennemis de toute autorité, de toute subordination, de toute puissance, de toute loi; nous prenons le droit de nier, d'avancer, de rétracter, de tolérer, de douter de tout ce que nous voulons; nous prétendons donner le démenti à tout le genre humain; traiter de faible tout ce qui ne s'accorde pas avec notre façon de penser; canoniser les vices, détruire les vertus, nourrir les passions, prendre l'intérêt pour mobile de toutes nos actions; et ne rapportant qu'à nous-mêmes les principes de notre raisonnement et la règle de nos mœurs, nous ne voulons reconnaître ni Dieu, ni religion, ni prêtre, ni Roi, ni..."

Damon, Cléante, D'Alvalence and Toupet are the four

1. *La nouvelle Philosophie*, pp. 9-10.

Philosophes, descendants of the "Philosophe à la mode," who have constituted themselves leaders of the philosophic movement. All of them have established self-interest as the supreme factor in determining their activities. But each has found in this doctrine of self-interest an incentive for the development of different vices. Damon, Narcisse, and Cléante have adopted it because it has appealed to their selfishness, laziness, or inactivity; D'Alvalence, because it has satisfied his ambition for glory; Toupet, because it has gratified his desire for absolute independence. In other words, all four have seen in the doctrine an excuse for the assertion of individualism. Needless to add, the assertion of individualism is regarded by these playwrights as detrimental to the laws of social organization. Thus a principle of ethics has become, according to this group of plays, the foundation of a movement which is menacing organized society.

The movement has spread to such an extent that the playwrights feel justified in portraying a second hierarchy of "Philosophes à la mode." Around Damon, Cléante, D'Alvalence, and Toupet are grouped countless Philosophes holding positions of minor importance in the party. In Palissot's *Les Philosophes*, there are Théophraste and Dortidius, exponents of Helvétius' doctrine, but in no sense leaders of the movement. In *Le petit Philosophe*, there is a whole troop waiting to take orders from Da[illegible] *Le Sage*, there is a baroness who allies herself wit[illegible] because it is in fashion and because it promises a ma[illegible]vard to all of its adherents. There is also, in the la[illegible]ct of the same play, the "Faux Philosophe" who has [illegible]perimented with three surviving children out of thirteen in order to prove that man is nothing more than animal, that education is the sole basis of our religious beliefs and that there is no distinction in the virtue of the sexes. In *Les Philosophes de bois*, we have already mentioned Fagot, Sapin, Durchêne, and Dusaule. In *Les Courtisannes*, there is Sophanès, a cynic, who believes that marriage is a makeshift, that morality is a simple word

without meaning, and that interest is the god who has enslaved all mankind. In *L'Homme dangereux*, there is Valère, the slanderer and misanthrope, vicious by nature. Finally, in *Le Séducteur*, there is Zéronès, a rascal masquerading beneath a formerly respected title. Between the leaders, Damon, Cléante, D'Alvalence, and Toupet, and the 'second-raters', Sophanès, Valère, Zéronès, Sapin, there is an enormous distance. The leaders have more learning, they have been educated more carefully, they are comfortably situated as far as worldly goods are concerned. As a consequence, they produce ideas often unsound, but they regard them in a spirit of dilettantism. The representatives of the second hierarchy are less learned and they lack both the wealth and the good breeding of the leaders. Less prolific of ideas, they are more tenacious in appropriating and in propagating, regardless of morality, all ideas which offer them a personal advantage.

There is a third hierarchy in the "Philosophe à la mode" group: the 'apprentice' Philosophe. The most striking scene of *Les Philosophes* is the one in which Valère attempts to educate Carondas, his valet.[1] The master declares to his servant that all men are equal, that all property rights should be abolished, and that personal interest is the norm whereby all activity should be regulated. Carondas listens intently, enraptured at seeing the abolition of social distinctions and himself the equal of his master, and he attempts immediately to take advantage of his new situation by stealing his master's watch, but he is caught and severely reprimanded. Thus are portrayed the consequences resulting from the promiscuous preaching of the doctrine of equality.

The theme of the education of Carondas is repeated again and again in this group of plays. In *Le petit Philosophe*, Damon has inspired Valentin, his valet, with the idea of the equality of man, so that the latter has adopted the new philosophy and speaks of the party as "Nous."[2] In *Le Sage*,

1. Act II, scene 1.
2. *Le petit Philosophe*, p. 40.

'Alvalence has given some lessons to his valet Sileste. aving taught him that all men are equal, he proceeds to ove to him that a valet is as good as a king; a valet Phi- sophe, in fact, is king of the universe. All that is necessary is assert one's self, to dare everything.[1] Sileste becomes terested, adopts the new philosophy, and begins to equal- e more nearly the fortunes of this world by stealing his aster's jewels. In the same play, M. Salmouth, intendant the Comte d'Orfe, has also profited by his lessons in phil- sophy and absconded with the Count's possessions to Eng- nd, leaving behind a very expressive note of farewell.[2] ne of the themes of *Crispin Philosophe* is the education of rispin, the valet of Cléante. Having been told that the basic rinciples of philosophy are tranquillity and repose, the lazy alet immediately becomes a member of the sect.[3] He forgets is master's orders, ignores his interests, and is finally driv- n away by the man who instilled in him the doctrine. In *es Philosophes de bois*, there is a whole group of "valets hilosophes." There is Polichinelle, who would fain cease is occupation as a storekeeper and become a member of the ect. He knows not how to read, he has no talents, he does ot even possess an average intelligence, yet he is initiated nto the secrets of the order of philosophy. Once master of hese secrets, what does he do? With scarcely a spark of intel- gence, he goes to preaching the doctrine to Dame Gigogne, is wife: "The wise man is he who lives for himself, and who feels no need to think of others; he has no cares, he ves for repose." To Dame Gigogne protesting and demand- ng whether Polichinelle, a married man, should not look out or his family, he responds:

> Fi donc! les préjugés, madame, où vous voilà,
> Ne sont que pour les gens de la plus mince étoffe.

1. *Le Sage*, pp. 36-37.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
3. *Le Valet Philosophe*, p. 146.

Dame Gigogne finds it impossible to resist such doctrine and at once wants to become a "Philosophesse." Gilles' wife has already become one, and, two months after her initiation she has beaten him soundly. Arlequin, a valet, was carrying to his master a cheese wrapped in a leaflet from the *Maximes d'un sage*. He read in it that there is neither valet nor master that solicitude for another is but unnecessary worry and

> Que l'intérêt peut tout, que l'amour de son être
> A tout mortel doit se faire connaître,
> Qu'enfin tous les biens sont communs,
> Ou tous du moins le devraient être.

He adopted the doctrine at once, ate the cheese, and, being unfortunate enough not to have a Philosophe master, he paid upon his back for the indiscretion, learning thus the lesson that he had better not become a Philosophe. In *La nouvelle Philosophie*, Toupet instructed Jérôme in the new philosophy. Jérôme immediately regretted that he had not met Toupet a week sooner, when an opportunity had presented itself to steal enough money to make himself comfortable for life. Finally, Zéronès, in *Le Séducteur*, a creature of the same ability as Polichinelle, is endowed with the title and uses it to cheat Orgon.

Thus each of these plays bears testimony to the growth and spread of the "Philosophe à la mode." Beginning among a comparatively small group of libertines and idlers, the sect had grown to embrace the following distinct groups of individuals: those who like Cléante sought to avoid their obligations to society; those who, like the baroness of *Le Sage* or Toupet of *La nouvelle Philosophie*, saw in the doctrine a personal advantage to be gained; and those incompetent and unscrupulous individuals who, like the valets, hoped by adopting the new philosophy to rise socially. In short, the "Philosophe à la mode" was to be found in all castes of the social order: the noble or the man of the people, the wealthy or the indigent, the intelligent or the ignorant, those with a definite system of philosophy

r those with a few revolutionary ideas. By one thing only vas he distinguished: an acceptance of the doctrine of person- l interest as the standard of his life.

Since these characters are exponents either of the theory f self-interest or of some analogous system of philosophy, still remains to examine how accurately and in how much etail they, as spokesmen, are made to interpret the doctrine f which they are representatives. To begin with Palissot's lay, Valère there undertakes to instruct Frontin (alias Caron- as) in the new philosophy:[1]

Sur des rochers on plaçait la vertu?
Y grimpait qui pouvait. L'homme était méconnu.
Ce roi des animaux, sans guide et sans boussole,
Sur l'océan du monde errait au gré d'Éole ;
Mais enfin nous savons quel est son vrai moteur,
L'homme est toujours conduit par l'attrait du bonheur.
C'est dans ses passions qu'il en trouve la source;
Sans elle, le mobile, arrêté dans sa course,
Languirait tristement à la terre attaché.
Ce pouvoir inconnu, ce principe caché,
N'a pu se dérober à la philosophie,
Et la morale, enfin, est soumise au génie.
Du globe où nous vivons, despote universel,
Il n'est qu'un seul ressort, l'intérêt personnel;
A tous nos sentiments, c'est lui seul qui préside;...
L'homme civilisé reconnaît son empire;
Il commande en un mot à tout ce qui respire.

lappiness the goal to which every human being aspires, the assions the source of all human activity, and personal inter- st the norm by which all human activity is judged, such re the three leading ideas[2] which Palissot chose to criticize n the doctrine of Helvétius. Elsewhere[3] he gives a synopsis f the book of Helvétius:

1. Palissot, *Œuvres*, edition of 1787, Vol. II, p. 45.
2. *Cf.* Helvétius, *De l'Esprit* (Ed. Keim), p. 41: "La vertu n'est que le ésir du bonheur des hommes"; and p. 57: "Je dis que tous les hommes e tendent qu'à leur bonheur"; and p. 90: "Les passions sont, dans le oral, ce que, dans le physique, est le mouvement; il crée, anéantit, onserve, anime tout, et sans lui tout est mort. Ce sont elles aussi qui vifient le monde moral."
3. *Les Philosophes*, p. 35.

J'y traite en abrégé de l'Esprit, du bon Sens,
Des passions, des Loix et des Gouvernements,
De la vertu, des mœurs, du Climat, des Usages,
Des peuples Policés, et des peuples sauvages,
Du désordre apparent, de l'ordre universel,
Du bonheur idéal et du bonheur réel.

Palissot's exposition of Rousseau's philosophy is not s detailed as his exposition of that of Helvétius. Crispin, in th "quatre pattes" scene, endeavors to give the gist of th theory of the decline of civilization:

En nous civilisant, nous avons tout perdu,
La santé, le bonheur, et même la vertu.
Je me renferme donc dans la vie animale ;
Vous voyez ma cuisine, elle est simple et frugale.
On ne peut, il est vrai, se contenter à moins;
Mais j'ai su m'enrichir en perdant des besoins.

The doctrine of inequality is expressed in three lines. Ca ondas says to Valère:[1]

Les hommes sont égaux par le droit de nature ;
Je suis, quoique Frontin, votre égal,

and Valère, in the course of the same conversation, state that "tous les biens devraient être communs." Thus, in th exposition of Rousseau's doctrines, Palissot limited himsel to the briefest statements possible, boiling down two intri cately constructed systems to two simple, unqualified ideas

The exposition is even briefer in *Le Sage ou le Philosoph du jour*. M. Salmouth, valet to the Comte d'Orfe, gives th merest outline of the doctrine of Rousseau:[2]

Aiant appris par un docte entretien,
Que la vertu n'est rien que le bien-être;
Que, qui jouit, n'importe par quels droits,
Est Sage seul, fût-il Juif ou Chinois...

1. *Les Philosophes*, p. 40.
2. *Le Sage*, p. 84.

nd Helvétius is accorded only three lines:

> Imposons-en, innocents ou coupables,
> N'importe pas; l'un et l'autre est égal.
> Lorsqu'il s'agit du bonheur général.

In *Le petit Philosophe*, Damon gives a clear, concise synop-
s of the doctrine of the decline of civilization:[1]

> Je tiens que le dessein, la danse et la musique
> Devraient par la Police être bien deffendus,
> Qu'ils sont plus dangereux que tel écrit qu'on blâme,
> Que sans nourrir l'esprit, ils ont gâté les cœurs,
> Que tout art mécanique énerve, engourdit l'âme
> Et qu'enfin les talents ont corrompu les mœurs.

lis exposition of the doctrine of inequality consists in the
ıere statement:[2]

> Les hommes sont égaux malgré leur vanité.

n the other hand, his summary of the doctrine of Helvétius
s much more to the point:[3]

> Oui, le trait est réel,
> L'agréable nous plaît ; mais qu'aime-t-on ? L'utile.
> L'homme n'a qu'un but, qu'un mobile
> C'est son intérêt personnel.

In *Les Philosophes de bois*, the doctrine of personal interest
misstated:[4]

> Si Gigogne sait agir avec sagesse,
> Elle consultera l'intérêt personnel,

ıd that of inequality is only fragmentary:[5]

> L'homme s'est fait esclave en se donnant des lois,
> Et tout n'irait que mieux, s'il vivait dans les bois.

1. *Le petit Philosophe*, p. 22.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
4. *Les Philosophes de bois*, p. 19.
5 *Ibid.*, p. 27.

In another place,[1] the two are strangely mixed:

> Ce passsage enseignait qu'il n'est ni valet ni maître.
> Que les soins pour autrui sont des soins superflus,
> Que l'intérêt peut tout, que l'amour de son être
> A tout mortel doit se faire connaître ;
> Qu'enfin tous les biens sont communs,
> Ou tous, du moins, le devraient être.

In *Les Courtisannes*, only one line — "L'intérêt est le Die qui captive les hommes" — could have been taken out of th system of Helvétius. In all of the other plays of this grou no direct exposition is given of any of the four leading phi osophies of the day.

In sum, these plays set forth only imperfectly the philos phy of Helvétius, of Rousseau, of Diderot and of Voltair *Les Philosophes* reduced the intricate systems of Rousse and of Helvétius to a bare half-dozen categorical statement and the other plays are even more summary, so that tho who witnessed the performances of these plays and wh knew from first-hand information nothing about Rousseau Helvétius and the others could have inferred that the doctri of Rousseau consisted only in the statements that all me are equal, and that the arts and the sciences have caused th decline of civilization. They could likewise have inferre that the doctrine of Helvétius consisted solely in the thr statements that man should seek his happiness, that the pa sions are supreme in controlling human activity, and th the guiding principle of an individual is rightly his own we fare. As a presentation of the abstract theories of the Ph losophes, these plays are of no value whatsoever. It is ev possible that they injured the cause of the opponents of t Philosophic Party, and in any event to them is attributab a large part in the confusion which prevailed concerning t nature of the Philosophe.

While the plays are valueless as a detailed presentation

1. *Les Philosophes de bois*, p. 23.

ıe specific doctrines of the Philosophic Party, they do serve to ɛflect the spread of ideas from the leaders of the encyclopedic ıovement to the general public. A primary aim of the play-ɣright is to show how an individual, fascinated by a doctrine, ıay condense it into certain specific dangerous ideas, and may ttempt to convert others to them. In other words, while the lays do not furnish a critique of the four principle systems of hilosophy of the eighteenth century, they portray the rise f the "Philosophe à la mode," the growth of the sect, the pread of its ideas, and the danger resulting from both the ideas and their spread. Two statements taken from the oppo-ents of the Philosophes will help to bring this out. On the ccasion of the representation of *Les Philosophes*, Fréron[1] vrote in explanation of the aim of the author: "L'auteur n'a as prétendu faire passer les Philosophes pour des voleurs; il a oulu seulement faire voir que certains principes de philoso-hie peuvent conduire des gens grossiers, des ignorants, des alets qui prennent tout à la lettre, à des actions funestes our la société et pour eux-mêmes." And when Poinsinet ublished *Le petit Philosophe*, he stated in his preface: "Tel espect que doivent inspirer les grands ouvrages, on ne peut ier que dans nombre d'écrits modernes il ne se soit glissé es maximes également contraires aux loix, aux mœurs, et ux usages, qui cependant ont séduit quelques esprits, et roduit des prosélites."

The "maximes contraires aux loix" deduced from the lead-ıg philosophical doctrines of the period are carefully de-ıiled in each of the plays of this group. I have extracted from ach play the statements of principles which are put into the ıouths of the characters with the appearance of being offered s specimens of the principles the Philosophes are propaga-

1. *Année littéraire*, 1760, Vol. IV, p. 221. Cf. the statement of Bar-ier, *Journal*, Vol. IV, p. 347: "On y traite ces philosophes et ces ıvants comme des coquins, qui n'ont cherché qu'à pervertir les mœurs à détruire tous les préjugés nécessaires pour maintenir le bon ordre ans la société."

ting and encouraging, classifying them according as the seemed political, ethical, or religious. In the following table, list for each case a condensed statement of the idea, alon with the play and the name of the character who is speaking

1) *Political Ideas*

Il n'est ni valet ni maître. C, p. 23: Arlequin.
Tous les biens sont communs. C, p. 23: Arlequin.
L'homme s'est fait esclave en se donnant des loix. A, p. 10 Théophraste; C, p. 27: Gigogne.
Le Philosophe est roi de l'univers. B, p. 35: D'Alvalence.
Il n'est de loi que la loi du bien-être. B, p. 25: Baronne.
Ayant l'égalité, tu possèdes la terre. B, p. 36: D'Alvalence.
Tout fut commun, tout va le devenir. B, p. 36: D'Alvalence.
Plus de mortels dans des cachots affreux. B, p. 36: D'Alvalenc
L'homme est né pour n'avoir point de maître. B, p. 84: Sa mouth.
En nous civilisant, nous avons tout perdu: la santé, le bonheu et même la vertu. A, pp. 102-03: Crispin.
Les hommes sont égaux par le droit de nature. A, p. 4 Carondas.
La nature est mon livre. I, p. 11: Zéronès.
Tous les biens devraient être communs. A, p. 46: Valère; (p. 23: Arlequin.
Je ne sers point les rois. B, p. 48: D'Alvalence.
L'homme heureux aura pour loi l'instinct de la nature. B, p. 3 D'Alvalence.
Que m'importe en quel lieu je sois né. B, p. 28: D'Alvalence.
Dans un pays l'esprit n'est pas borné. B, p. 28: D'Alvalence.
C'est se borner que d'être citoyen. A, p. 88: Dortidius.
Le Sage est le seul monarque et son Législateur. A, p. 88: Do tidius.
Je ne m'occupe pas des Rois, de leur querelle. A, p. 88: Dort dius.
Le Véritable Sage est un Cosmopolite. A, p. 88: Dortidius.
Rien n'avancera, tant que le Ministère ne nous confiera le bonhe de la terre. I, p. 6: Zéronès.

1. A = *Les Philosophes*; B = *Le Sage*; C = *Les Philosophes de bo* D = *Le petit Philosophe*; E = *La nouvelle Philosophie*; F = *Crisp Philosophe*; G = *L'Homme dangereux*; H = *Les Courtisannes*; I = *Séducteur*.

Voulez-vous vivre heureux, vivez toujours sans maître, E, p. 4: Toupet.

Nous pouvons vivre sans loix. E, p. 5: Toupet.

Je prétends tout renverser par goût pour la vertu. B, p. 51: D'Alvalence.

Je regarde le Roi comme un autre homme. E, p. 3: Toupet.

Les hommes sont égaux malgré leur vanité. D, p. 19: Damon.

Un Sage ne connaît ni coutume, ni loi, ni dignité, ni rang, ni préséance. D, p. 19: Damon.

Ma patrie est aux lieux où je me trouve bien. D, p. 37: Damon; B, p. 28: D'Alvalence.

2) *Ethical Ideas*

Les soins pour autrui sont des soins superflus. C, p. 23: Arlequin.

L'intérêt peut tout. C, p. 23: Arlequin.

L'intérêt est le Dieu qui captive les hommes. H, p. 278: Sophanès.

Je prétends ne plus exister que pour moi. H, p. 240: Gernance.

En vertus, les sexes sont égaux. B, p. 92: Faux Philosophe.

L'homme est bête. B, p. 74: D'Alvalence.

Le plaisir est doux, le mal fâcheux, la contrainte pénible. B, p. 74: D'Alvalence.

Pour convaincre, il faut donner des preuves. B, p. 74: D'Alvalence.

La vertu n'est rien que le bien-être. B, p. 84: Salmouth.

Qui jouit, est Sage seul, n'importe par quels droits. B, p. 84: Salmouth.

L'homme est toujours conduit par l'attrait du bonheur. A, p. 45: Valère.

La source du bonheur est dans les passions. A, p. 45: Valère.

Le seul ressort est l'intérêt personnel. A, p. 45: Valère.

L'homme est réduit au rang des animaux. A, p. 100: Théophraste.

Le Sage ne vit que pour soi et ne doit pas songer aux autres. C, p. 17: Polichinelle; F, p. 141, and p. 156: Cléante.

Si quelqu'un sait agir avec sagesse, il consultera l'intérêt personnel. C, p. 19: Polichinelle.

Le bonheur tient aux opinions. H, p. 282: Sophanès.

L'usage et le public sont le mépris du Sage. H, p. 227: Sophanès.

Nos plus purs sentiments sont l'ouvrage de nos sens. H, p. 227 Sophanès.

Le moral n'est qu'un mot, tenons-nous au physique. H, p. 227 Sophanès.

L'instinct de la nature est ma règle et mon code. H, p. 228 Sophanès.

Ma vertu favorite est la reconnaissance. H, p. 229: Sophanès.

Ma foi, le vrai bonheur est de vivre pour soi. H, p. 254 Marton.

Je suis les lois de la nature. H, p. 254: Marton.

La franchise est la vertu d'un sot. A, p. 46: Valère.

Il s'agit d'être heureux, il n'importe comment. A, p. 36: Valère

Bien voir ses intérêts, c'est être de bon sens. A, p. 46: Valère

C'est une faiblesse que de se tourmenter d'un scrupule. A, p. 46 Valère.

Ce morveux de cythère est parmi nous réduit au simple ran d'instinct et d'appétit. B, p. 44: D'Alvalence.

Le crime est un mot rebattu. B, p. 30: D'Alvalence.

Que tout soit mal, tout deviendra vertu. B, p. 30: D'Alvalence

Je ne me règle plus sur les opinions. A, p. 102: Crispin.

Le mariage n'est au fond qu'un nœud populaire. H, p. 278 Sophanès; C, p. 17: Polichinelle.

La Sagesse consiste à élever son âme au-dessus des événement de la vie. F, p. 142: Cléante.

L'espèce humaine est méprisable. F, p. 145: Cléante.

Il faut songer à s'amuser au moment présent, le reste n'est rien F, p. 151: Cléante.

La société est faite pour le bonheur des particuliers. F, p. 162 Cléante.

La société n'exige pas le sacrifice de l'individu. F, p. 162 Cléante.

Votre cœur parle, il faut écouter son désir. D, p. 30: Damon.

Lorsqu'il s'agit de passion, allez, se contenter n'est point un faiblesse. Et le cœur a toujours raison. D, p. 31: Damon.

Chacun a le droit d'être heureux à sa mode. H, p. 282 Sophanès.

Sacrifions tout à nos intérêts. B, p. 25: Baronne.

3) *Religious Ideas*

Le spectacle du monde et des cieux ne suffit pas pour démontre des Dieux. B, p. 91: Faux Philosophe.

L'éducation établit une Religion. B, p. 91: Faux Philosophe.
Pour convaincre, il faut donner des preuves. B, p. 74: D'Alvalence.
Nous devons tout à la nature. E, p. 5: Toupet.
Les maux que nous ressentons, nous les tenons d'une certaine fatalité. E, p. 5: Toupet.
Crédule est devenu équivalent de sot. A, p. 64: Damis.

If the above table may be taken as a fair indication of the pe, value, and relative numbers of the ideas proposed by e new philosophers, it serves to bring out two facts. First, e authors of the plays laid no especial stress upon the ews which the Philosophe had concerning religion. While e ideas classified as ethical are by no means dissociated om religious ideas, those which specifically concern the ganization, the history and value, and the creeds and prac-es of the Church are missing. Compare the relative fre-ency of ideas which concern the organization, purpose, and eory of government, and the rights of the governed, and e still greater frequency of the ideas which concern the sic morality of the individual. It would seem, then, to dge from the above table, that the Philosophe was consid-ed a greater menace to the government than to the Church, d that he threatened the morality of the individual more than did either church or state. Second, a number of the ideas e of a genuinely "advanced" type. Among the political eas the negation of nationalism and of patriotism, among e ethical ideas the denunciation of marriage, and among e religious ideas the importance accorded environment in e determination of an individual's religion, all these are even day considered "radical," or "dangerous."

Thus eight plays between 1760 and 1778 indicate realiza-n of and alarm at the spread of the philosophic ideas. They ow how at first only a few were attracted to the doctrine self-interest, but how, later, these few converted others her by playing upon their ambitions or by flattering their eed or vanity. The group of "Philosophes à la mode" had

grown until it included individuals of different social standing of different degrees of intelligence, and of different talents who were adopting and enlarging certain ideas until, in th end, these ideas threatened to overthrow all the time-hon ored standards of morality and all the accepted institutions

CHAPTER V

THE "SOI-DISANT PHILOSOPHE" (1750-1800)

n January, 1759, sixteen months before the presentation Palissot's *Philosophes*, the *Mercure* published a short story tten by the Encyclopedist Marmontel and entitled *Le soi-ant Philosophe, anecdote moderne.*[1] Later, in 1761, the hor included this story in his *Contes moraux*,[2] where, in lines of the preface,[3] he barely mentioned its origin: "La diesse avec laquelle certains petits originaux se donnent nom de philosophe m'a fourni le sujet du *Philosophe soi-ant.*"[4] The work was favorably received both by the Phil-phic Party and by their opponents. Fréron, in the *Année éraire*,[5] exclaimed: "Ce conte du philosophe soi-disant très joli. Il serait heureux que M. Marmontel pût corriger public de plusieurs de ses erreurs. Une des plus grossières de confondre la singularité avec le génie et la vertu. Mais aura toujours des fourbes et des dupes. J'aurais voulu Ariste fût encore plus bizarre, plus ridicule, plus faux, s imprudent et que l'auteur eût placé dans la société de rice beaucoup de sots émerveillés. Il ne pouvait charger ez ces deux tableaux. Le monde lui fournissait tant d'origi-

. Lenel, *Marmontel* (1902), p. 254.
. Marmontel, *Contes moraux avec une apologie du théâtre*, Paris, 1, 2 vols., 12mo.
. Vol. I, p. xlix.
. The plot of *Le soi-disant Philosophe* repeats that of the medieval iau, *Le Lai d'Aristote*. See Lanson, G., *Histoire de la littératur nçaise*, p. 104. In 1780, there appeared an opera by Piis and Barré on theme entitled *Aristote amoureux, ou le Philosophe bridé*. The e denouement had been used in *L'Oracle* of St. Foix.
. 1761, Vol. II, p. 164.

naux, surtout de la dernière espèce." The *Journal encyclop*
dique[1] added its approval to that of the *Année littéraire*: "
ce nombre [*i.e.*, of amusing stories] est le *Philosophe s*
disant. La hardiesse avec laquelle certains petits originaux
donnent le nom de philosophe a fourni à M. Marmontel
sujet de ce conte qui nous a paru très bien fait. On nous
assuré qu'il ne tarderait point à paraître sur la scène. No
le désirons, et nous sommes persuadés que ce sujet traité p
une main habile y doit faire fortune."

The *Journal encyclopédique* rightly saw in the *Soi-disa*
Philosophe material for a successful play. The philosoph
quarrel was particularly acute between 1758 and 1762, and t
subject-matter must have appealed to playwrights. Moreove
Marmontel's story concerned the development of a charact
and of an incident which could readily be presented in dra
atic form, and it was written almost entirely in dialogu
It was needful only to suppress a few transitions and to a
a few stage directions in order to complete the dramatisatio
This was done at least nine times during the thirty yea
between 1760 and 1790, as will be seen from the followi
list of plays:[3]

1) *Le Philosophe soi-disant*, comédie en trois actes en ve

Given only in Brunet, who attributed it to Martin, a pr
fessor of philosophy at Château-Gontier and author of
Philosophe pyronnien (1761). While I know nothing furth
about these two plays, neither of which is to be found at t
Bibliothèque Nationale, Brunet's attribution is unsubsta

1. June, 1761, p. 81.

2. Thus M[lle] de Kinschott (see *infra*) in many instances copied M
montel's dialogue word for word. Many of Marmontel's *Contes* seem
to be peculiarly well adapted to the stage; during the eighteenth ce
ury they were a mine to the playwright. Lenel (p. 566) gives
incomplete list of plays drawn from the *Contes moraux*. To his list m
be added the following: Napoli-Sigorelli: *La Faustina*, Lucca, 17
Doisemont: *Laurette*, 1781; Mérard de Saint-Just: *Laurette*, 1765 (Le
cites one of the Laurette plays); Anonymous: *Le bon Mari*, 1767.

3. Of the eleven plays given in this list, Soleinne, and Brunet, w
copied Soleinne, mentioned seven; Duval mentioned eight, Lenel in
thesis on Marmontel mentioned.

ted and may be due merely to a physical juxtaposition. leinne possessed a copy of the *Philosophe pyronnien*, bound th a copy of *Le Philosophe soi-disant*.

2) *Le Philosophe soi-disant*, comédie en trois actes et en vers. présentée pour la première fois à Bordeaux par les Comé-ens Français et Italiens, le 9 Octobre 1762. Bordeaux, chez an Chappuis, imprimeur du spectacle sur les fossées de lôtel-de-Ville. MDCCLXII. Avec approbation et permission. .

Bernouilly is the author. Mentioned in the *Bibliothèque théâtre français*, Vol. III, p. 220; Quérard; Soleinne, . 2034. Quérard gives the date 1764, and the format 12^mo^. ıval gives "Paris, 1766 (Gueffier)," evidently confusing the ay with that of Lesbros de la Versane, and states that the ay is at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Y 5546, p. 41. All orts to locate Bernouilly's play at the Bibliothèque Natio-le have proven futile, but a copy exists in the Collection ndel at the Comédie Française.

3) *Le Philosophe prétendu*, comédie en trois actes en vers en ariettes, 1762.

The author is Desfontaines. Mentioned in *Anecdotes dra-ıtiques*, Vol. II, p. 66; Michaud, *Biographie universelle*; *ctionnaire des théâtres*, Vol. VII, p. 348 (a synopsis of e play is given); *Dictionnaire dramatique*, Vol. II, p. 421; unet; Soleinne, No. 3060; and Omont, Fonds Français, . 9243. The manuscript is at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

4) *Le Philosophe soi-disant*, comédie en vers et en trois es, Bordeaux, 1762.

A play is so listed in the unpublished catalogue of the bliothèque Nationale under the number Y 14139. This is e catalogue number of Lesbros' play. I am inclined to believe ıt no such anonymous play exists and that the entry is the ult of a confusion in the cataloguing of No. 7 and No. 2.

5) *Le Philosophe soi-disant*, comédie, trois actes, en vers. 63, Théâtre Français.

Mentioned in Mézières, p. 179, No. 3702, who names La

Volière as the author and states that he was born at Paris in 1736 and was still living. The Comédie Française, so far as I have been able to find out, has no record of the performances.

6) *Le Philosophe soi-disant* or *Le soi-disant Philosophe* comédie, un acte, en vers, 1764.

Willemain d'Abancourt is the author. Mentioned in the *Bibliothèque du théâtre français*, Vol. III, p. 223; Soleinne Nos. 2034, 2222, 2098; La Vallière; Michaud, *Biographie universelle*. Soleinne, following La Vallière, states that the play was never printed. I have been unable to locate it.

7) *Le Philosophe supposé*, comédie en trois actes, dédiée à M. Dubonpar, Lt. Gen. et Commandant de la Marine à Toulon, par L. P. de Bernouilly. 1765.

Mentioned in Nougaret, *Les Spectacles des foires*, Vol. VI (1786), p. 179, and in Duval, No. 7392. The play was presented at the Théâtre des Variétés in 1785. A manuscript of the play is now at the Comédie Française. According to Duval, another manuscript existed at the Archives de la Préfecture de Police. It is no longer there.

8) *Le Philosophe soi-disant*, comédie en vers et en trois actes. A Amsterdam et se trouve à Paris chez Gueffier, fils rue de la Harpe, vis-à-vis la rue S. Saverin, à la Liberté MDCCLXVI. 8vo.

Mentioned in Brunet; Soleinne, No. 3202; and *Anecdotes dramatiques*, supplement, p. 450. This play was published anonymously with a dedication to Madame la Comtesse de S***. Barbier states that Lesbros de la Versane is the author. The play can be found at the Bibliothèque Nationale Yth 14139 and at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal.

9) *Le Philosophe soit-disant* [*sic*], comédie en trois actes et en prose, tirée des contes de M. de Marmontel, par Mlle A. C. de K. A Maestricht, chez Jacques Lekens, Marchand Libraire 1767.

Mentioned in Grimm (Ed. Tourneux, Vol. VII, p. 186) as a "mauvaise pièce." Barbier states that Mlle de Kinschott i

e author. Faber, *Le Théâtre français en Belgique* (1878), ol. II, p. 85, considered the play as of the same type as *Homme singulier* of Destouches. According to Duval, o. 7389, a copy of this play existed at the Bibliothèque ationale, Y 5546, p. 515. The Bibliothèque Royale de Belque has the only copy which I have been able to locate. edicated to "Son Altesse Sérénissime, M^gr le Prince Orange et de Nassau, Stadhouder Héréditaire et Capitaine énéral, et Amiral des Provinces Unies."

10) *Le Philosophe soi-disant*, comédie, deux actes, prose, 785.

Mentioned only in Duval, No. 7390. Given at the Théâtre es Grands Danseurs, the 24th of May, 1785. According to uval, a manuscript of this play existed at the Archives de Préfecture de Police. It is not now there, nor have I suceded in locating a printed copy. There were seventeen perrmances between May 24 and July 24, 1785. See *Journal Paris* for those dates.

11) *Le Philosophe soi-disant*, comédie en vers et en trois tes de J. Castaing, imprimée par lui-même et représentée our la première fois sur le Théâtre de la Comédie à Alençon, mois de Janvier 1787.

Published in his *Théâtre*, 1791-92, 3 vols., 8^vo. Vol. I, . 1-146. Castaing was one of the promoters of the theatre Alençon. See Duval, L., *Le Théâtre à Alençon*. Only thirty pies of his *Théâtre* were published, the author giving as his ason for the small number of copies that he did not wish bore more than that number of his friends. The Biblioèque Nationale does not possess a copy, but one is preserved the Collection Rondel.

Thus there existed at least nine plays[1] called *Le Philosophe i-disant* or with an analogous title. Of these nine plays, I ve been able to control six (Nos. 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 11), and ese all go back to the story of Marmontel as the source for eir plot.

1. Plays No. 1 and No. 4 of the list of eleven may be duplicates.

There are several indications that the appeal of Marmontel's story was widespread. First, no one of the authors listed is known to be an opponent of the encyclopedic movement, and Abancourt was, on the contrary, an admirer of Voltaire.[1] Second, the group was not even predominantly Parisian, and the plays were presented in different parts of France. Bernouilly was from the vicinity of Bordeaux; Castaing was from Alençon; M[lle] de Kinschott, from Belgium; Lesbros de la Versane, from Marseilles; Martin, from Château-Gontier[2]; and Abancourt, from Paris. Castaing's play was never presented elsewhere than at Alençon, and Bernouilly's seems first to have been played at Bordeaux. Third, the performances were before audiences of diversified tastes: Abancourt, Kinschott, and Lesbros de la Versane intended their play for a "théâtre de société"; Desfontaines' play was staged at the Italiens; Bernouilly's, at the Variétés. One of the anonymous plays was performed seventeen times at the Théâtre des Grands Danseurs, and two of the plays were given before provincial audiences. Fourth, the dates cover a period of twenty-six years from 1761 to 1787, and if one may judge from the seventeen performances of the anonymous *Soi-disant Philosophe* of 1785 the public interest in the type must have been as keen in 1787 as in 1761. The importance accorded the Philosophe question, the frequency of a type of individual known as the "Soi-disant Philosophe," the hostile attitude of the public toward this individual and the delight experienced at his discomfiture, — all this is strikingly evidenced by these plays, written for audiences as far apart as those theatres of the boulevards and of the "comédies de société," by nine or ten individuals of different professions, of differing temperaments, from different regions, none of them avowedly partisans in the fight between the Philosophic Party and its opponents.

1. Abancourt was the author of *Voltaire à Romilly* and *Jean-Jacques Rousseau à ses derniers moments*. See *Biographie universelle*.
2. Quérard, *La France littéraire*.

At least six[1] of the plays show almost identical plot and haracters. *Le Philosophe soi-disant* of Bernouilly has introuced a Gascon who challenges Ariste to a duel for alienating he affections of his fiancée, the Présidente. In *Le Philosophe upposé*, Bernouilly prefaces the play with a scene between Blaise, gardener, and Lizette, serving-woman, in which Blaise upposedly expresses the opinion of the masses about the Soi-disant Philosophe." The play is identical with Berouilly's earlier production except for the prefatory scene, for n interpolated scene (Act II, scene vii) in which Blaise ttempts to make love to Lizette, and for a scene (Act III, cene iii) where half of Ariste's monologue is left out. In the *Philosophe prétendu*[2], the role of Finette, the serving-maid f Clarice, is suppressed, and Jasmin is replaced by Pasquin s the valet of Ariste. The Présidente of this play forces Ariste o dance in the ballet at the end of the first act. Cléon, not nowing the intentions of Clarice, becomes jealous of Ariste, nd reproaches the former for her levity. The setting for the lay is a birthday party which is being given to Clarice. In the lay of Castaing, there are numerous changes in the cast: the ole of the Philosophe is given to Cléon, and Ariste becomes he lover of Clarice; a Marquise is added to the list of ladies who pay court to the Philosophe; Lizette, the serving-maid f Clarice, is used also as a decoy for Cléon; and Frontin is dded as his valet. Finally, in the play of M^lle^ de Kinschott, a Fleur is valet to Clarice, and Lucinde unites with Clarice nd the Présidente in an effort to overcome the Philosophe's version for women.

In the portrayal of the Philosophe, Marmontel presents the haracter from two points of view: the Philosophe portrays imself as he wishes to appear, and he is analyzed by the

1. Kinschott, Lesbros, Bernouilly (both plays), Desfontaines, Castaing.

2. According to Bachaumont, the name of this play was changed hree times. Originally, it was called *Le Soi-disant*, then *Le soi-disant hilosophe*, and finally *Le Philosophe prétendu*. See *Mémoires secrets*, ol. XVI, p. 179.

other characters. In our consideration of the correspondence between the portrait in the story and in the plays we can obtain an adequately representative view if we analyze only the Philosophe's portrayal of himself.[1]

In Marmontel, Lesbros, and Desfontaines, Ariste begins by defining philosophy as the science of good and evil. Castaing's Cléon gives a similar definition, but he adds that philosophy knows how to trace cause and effect. Bernouilly's character defines philosophy as the science which teaches how to hate vice and cherish virtue. The Philosophe of Marmontel and of all the plays promises that the profit to be derived from philosophy is happiness, and that one finds it in making others happy. "In order to be happy," he says in Marmontel and in Bernouilly, "I have no prejudices, I depend upon no one, I live frugally, I love nothing, and I speak my mind." Lesbros' character adds that the Philosophe must avoid the fair sex, and live indifferent to peace and war. Castaing's Cléon changes "I speak my mind" to "I believe in what I say," and adds: "I pursue evil, do good, see all, and am often silent." In Marmontel, and in all the plays save Desfontaines, the Philosophe boasts that, thanks to his learning, he is the source of happiness to humanity, and that his greatest pleasure is to scorn all pleasure. To the question: "What do you do with your soul?" he replies: "I observe nature." In all, save Castaing, he objects to being classed with the rest of humanity. In all, save Bernouilly, the study of Nature awakens his curiosity, which to him is the source and delight of all intelligence. Here he pauses long enough to contrast the carnal pleasures with the pleasures of the intellect, and to maintain in all, save in Lesbros, that he has subordinated these carnal pleasures to his intelligence.

There follows, in Marmontel, a series of statements which bring out the misanthropic elements in the character of the

1. Marmontel's dialogue will be taken as the basis and variations from it will be noted. Kinschott follows Marmontel save here and there a slight change in construction, so she is omitted from this discussion

Philosophe. To him, the world is peopled with fools, evil-doers, and ungrateful individuals, and man, the most vicious of animals, is exceedingly vain, deceitful, and unfair. These items are entirely absent from Lesbros and Desfontaines, and Bernouilly has only the first. Castaing contains all the items save that man is vicious, and his statements are more extreme than are Marmontel's. For instance, in Castaing, man is "faux, noir, égoïste à l'excès, avide, ambitieux, arrogant, téméraire." In Marmontel and in Castaing, the Philosophe laments the good old days of Greece when the philosopher was a legislator. In Marmontel, Desfontaines, and Castaing, he objects to paying court to his superiors, and, in the same three, he confesses never to have discovered a virtue, but claims to have unmasked many a vice.

The philosophe shows also revolutionary tendencies. In Marmontel, Lesbros, and Desfontaines, he is unsocial, believing that society has destroyed everything. In Marmontel, and in all the plays save Bernouilly, he is essentially an egotist who preaches the doctrine of self-interest. Moreover, he condemns humanity for creating its customs, he asserts that vice exists solely when it disturbs social order, and that the laws of conduct are founded solely upon external appearances. These items occur only in Lesbros, Desfontaines, and Marmontel. In Lesbros and Desfontaines, he preaches the return to nature and to the good old times when man lived as a savage[1]; whereas, in Marmontel and Castaing, he does not preach a return to nature, but counsels adapting the lessons of nature to the needs of humanity. In Marmontel, Desfontaines, and Castaing, he makes liberty the "bien suprême." In Marmontel, Bernouilly, and Castaing, he condemns matrimony as an unendurable burden, and claims that the Philosophe has the ability to create a new universe, hidden from the eyes of the masses.

1. An evident allusion to the *Discours* of Rousseau. It is of interest to note that Lesbros misinterpreted Rousseau, whereas Marmontel had correctly interpreted him.

From the above enumeration of the characteristics and ideas of Ariste, we see that five authors used the same cast, the same situation, the same action, but that the determination, in each case save in the play of Kinschott, of the elements which go to make up the principal character differed. In the delineation of the Philosophe, not one of the plays contained as many items as Marmontel's story, written on the eve of the struggle between the Encyclopedic Party and their opponents. Bernouilly and Desfontaines, writing in 1762, omitted some of the items which bring out the misanthropic side of the character, and Lesbros, writing in 1766, omitted all of them. Castaing, whose play was produced in 1787, put back virtually every one of these items and strengthened them. On the other hand, Lesbros stressed more than Marmontel the traits of the Soi-disant Philosophe's character which are unsocial and destructive of the pillars of society. Desfontaines and Castaing emphasized those traits much less than Marmontel, while Bernouilly omitted them entirely. Lastly, Lesbros, Desfontaines, and Kinschott brought out more fully a note in the Philosophe's character which is only lightly stressed in Marmontel: the inevitable downfall of the Philosophe when he is face to face with the fair sex. While the temperament and the ability of the given author, his attitude toward the rise of the Philosophic Party, and his judgement of what would likely please his audience would be factors in determining his interpretation for the stage of the Soi-disant Philosophe, still, when an author who is dramatizing a story excises some element from the character of the central figure, as Bernouilly did in 1762, or Lesbros in 1766, the question arises whether it was not done because the author considered that this element no longer formed a part of the character. At all events, the Soi-disant Philosophe is differently conceived by five persons at four distinct intervals: proof either that the term was broad enough to cover the large number of individualities to which, over an extended period of years, the title was applied, or that to the evolution in the portrayal

here corresponded an evolution in the prototype. There must ave been a large number of individuals to whom the desigation could be applied, for Marmontel states at the beginning of his story that Clarice had for some time heard talk f nothing but Philosophes. And the numerous references to he term Soi-disant Philosophe in letters[1] and periodicals of he time bear witness to its widespread use, which did not isappear even with the closing of the century.[2]

If we generalize regarding this type of Philosophe on the asis of the elements common to the plays, we find that he as four characteristics. (1) He lays claim to virtues of the eal philosopher, feigning to be deeply interested in questions f good and evil, professing faith in the intelligence, and retending to be frugal, simple, free from prejudice, and an bserver of nature. (2) In spite of his protestations of virtue, e is a misanthrope: he considers humanity beneath him, has othing but scorn for his fellows, and hates mankind in gene-al. (3) As a result of his egoistic doctrine, he is unsocial and reaches dangerous ideas: abolition of marriage, destruction f laws, unlimited liberty proclaimed as a supreme good, eturn to nature as the only salvation for mankind, and the heory that vice lies not in committing a reprehensible act ut in being caught in so doing. (4) His so-called philosophy avers whenever he comes in contact with a member of the air sex. From this point of view, he is a descendant of the "Philosophe amoureux" of the early part of the century.[3] In

1. Cf. the following extract of a letter from Madame Du Deffand to oltaire, 1769: "Vos philosophes, ou plutôt soi-disant philosophes, sont le froids personnages: fastueux sans être riches, téméraires sans être raves, prêchant l'égalité par esprit de domination, se croyant les preniers hommes du monde, de penser ce que pensent tous les gens qui ensent; orgueilleux, haineux, vindicatifs; ils feraient haïr la philosohie." See Moland edition, Vol. XLVI, p. 221. The *Tribunal de la Folie* as a "prétendu philosophe" as one of its characters.

2. See *Colombine Philosophe soi-disant*, comédie en un acte et en rose, mêlée de Vaudevilles, représentée pour la première fois sur le héâtre du Vaudeville, le 17 Prairial, an XI. See, also, *Il se dicente hilosofo*, opéra Italien, musique de J. Mosca, représenté à Milan en 801.

3. See *supra*, Introduction.

the other three characteristics, however, there in nothing that forms an essential part of the "Philosophe amoureux," but much that is closely associated with such Philosophes as Rousseau and Helvétius.[1] Disdain for personal comfort, unsocial nature, and regard for the age of savagery form a link to Rousseau, and the doctrine of self-interest to Helvétius. Thus the "Philosophe soi-disant" is allied both to the "Philosophe amoureux" and to the "Philosophe à la mode." He has, moreover, at least one element in common with the "Misanthrope" of Molière, but with the difference that in the character created by Molière there is no lack of sincerity, while this is one of the most serious defects of the "Philosophe soi-disant."

This "Sous-philosophe" is a chameleon-like character of several complexions, one or another of which could seem dominant to the person appraising the character, to whom he might suggest Rousseau, Helvétius, or Voltaire; Bidault de Montigny, J.-B. Brissot, or Stanislas Leckzinsky; or even the obscure author of the *Délassements poétiques d'un Philosophe*. From another point of view, he was any individual who, according as emphasis was placed on one or another side of his nature, was misanthropic, doctrinaire or ridiculously in love. The term was applied by the Philosophes to unapproved imitators, by their enemies to the Philosophes themselves, and by others frequently to any who showed philosophic pretence. So long as the opposition had felt free to say of definite individuals: "This man is a Philosophe, this other is a philosopher," the public could distinguish Philosophe from philosopher, but when the playwrights had been forced to transfer their attacks from individuals to doctrines, the situation was less simple; and with the advent of the "Philosophe soi-disant," a type itself originated by a Philosophe, the confusion became complete. Whether Marmontel had so

1. Lenel, *Marmontel* (1902), p. 254. It has more than once been claimed that Marmontel had Rousseau in mind as his model.

tended it or not, his creation was of distinct advantage to
ıe Philosophic Party, for the Philosophe could now shield
mself behind the figure which he himself had introduced
to literature and had held up to ridicule, and could turn
ıe shafts which his enemies had directed at him against this
seudo-philosophe whom he had been the first to condemn.
To us it would seem that the most reprehensible charac-
ristics of the "Soi-disant Philosophe" are those which
ıincide with the traits of the "Philosophe à la mode." This
ıes not appear to have been the opinion of the playwrights.
ı Lesbros' play, he is an amusing, original being, who is
ınstantly making a pedantic display of his wisdom,[1] and
ho furthermore pretends to have virtues which he does not
ıssess. In Desfontaines' play, he is criticized for the folly
wishing to dazzle others; he is a pretender. Bernouilly[2]
so emphasizes this affectation on the part of the hypocrite:

La Philosophie,
N'est, je le vois très bien, que pure hypocrisie.
C'est un masque sacré, qui dérobe à nos yeux
Un tas de fainéants, sermoneurs ennuyeux
Qui pour mieux attraper le vulgaire
Affectent au dehors une morale austère,

ıd Blaise, in a long tirade in Bernouilly's second play,
iticized the inconsistency between word and deed:[3]

Morguenne, un philosophe est une drôle de chose,
Ça n'ignore de rian, surtout ça jase et glose;
Sur un rian, ça vous fait un long galimathias
Que l'on trouve fort bien parce qu'on ne l'entends pas.
Rian n'est biau que c'qu'il fait, à tout il trouve à r'dire;
Quand je voulons pleurer, il dit que j'devons rire,
Rions-je, c'est bien pis; il nous traite de sots,
Et prétend nous prouver avec de grands mots
Que l'homme doit avoir pour tout de l'indifférence,

1. P. 14.
2. P. 11.
3. P. 1.

Ne s'attacher à rian, n'chérir que la science,
Mépriser le plaisir; et stapendant je voi
Que li-même souvent ne suit pas trop c'te loi.

Castaing, too, thinks that the philosophy is all imaginary and that the group is composed of charlatans who have only the appearance of sages:[1]

J'aime à leur prouver, malgré leur beau langage
Qu'ils n'ont que les dehors, l'apparence du Sage.

And so, contrary to the criticism of the the "Philosophe à la mode," all concur in finding that the greatest fault of the "Soi-disant Philosophe" is his inconsistency. Only Castaing finds him a menace to the peaceful existence of others:[2]

Car, dans tous les récits que partout j'en entends,
On dit qu'ils veulent tous se donner pour savants;
Qu'ils sont sentencieux, entêtés, vains, bizarres,
Farouches, durs, jaloux; de leur estime avares:
Que, de dogmes trompeurs, hérissant la raison,
Et, d'oracles en tout, affichant le jargon,
Ils donnent pour vertus de grands mots, de la bile;
Et, sous le masque adroit d'une imposture habile,
Déliés, cauteleux, et souples à propos,
Ils savent dans leur lacs envelopper les sots.

Such is the "Soi-disant Philosophe": a mixture of the "Philosophe à la mode," the misanthrope, and the "Philosophe amoureux"; representative not of the sect but of individuals serving to bring a respectable term into disrepute disavowed by the Encyclopedists whose ends, in a sense, he serves, and disregarded by the opposing party, who could see no advantage in letting their attention be diverted to him.

1. P. 53.
2. P. 3.

CHAPTER VI

THE PHILOSOPHE AS FADDIST (1760-1800)

While one group of playwrights was showing how Helvé-
s' doctrine of self-interest had become a menace to church,
te and society, and a second group was revealing how
e enormous increase in the number of pretended Phi-
ophes imperiled the advance of true knowledge, a third
oup turned their attention to the eccentricities of the Phi-
ophes. This third group is not completely separate from
e other two, since various dramatists who concerned them-
ves primarily with the more serious grievances against
e Philosophe followed the natural procedure of comedy and
ewise derided petty weaknesses attributable either directly
indirectly to his philosophy. For instance, in Palissot's
ilosophes, as well as in the *Philosophes* of 1742, the authors
nsured the universal desire of members of the Philosophic
rty to write quarto volumes. In both plays, also, the craze
ong the women for establishing "bureaux d'esprit" was
irized. Furthermore, Palissot, Poinsinet de Sivry, and La
rlière denounced the practice among the Philosophes of
ding excessively the works and ideas of fellow-partisans,
l of condemning all works and ideas which had not origi-
ed among members of the party.

The fads encouraged by the encyclopedic movement and
icatured between 1760 and 1789 by those who opposed
growth of the Philosophic Party are as follows: (1) the
ire of every Philosophe to compose a book; (2) the exaggera-
enthusiasm for England; (3) the indiscriminate and pedantic
rch for knowledge; (4) the transformation of the salons into
ureaux d'esprit"; and (5) the enthusiastic endorsement by the
ilosophes of their own works and those of their supporters.

The desire to get into print had been singled out for cri cism from the beginning of the movement. Damocle w author of the *Art de régner*, which aimed at the solution every problem likely to confront a monarch. Polimatte, in t *Faux Savant*,[1] had written a *Mythologie chronologique*, a he planned to translate into French verse, for the benefit magistrates who knew no Latin, the Code and the Digest. *Les Philosophes* of 1742, l'Etourdi[2] busied himself with volume on the *Art d'inventer*, while a group of his followe fashioned major and minor premises, scholions, and enth memes with a view to inserting them in the *Logique*, t *Politique*, and the *Droit des Gens*. Cydalise, in Palisso *Philosophes*,[3] outlined to Rosalie her book which dealt prima ily with political science. Damon, in *Le petit Philosoph* was writing a treatise. The marquis of *Le Sage* despatche dissertations upon government to "Pongos, Hurons, a Anthropophages"; the Baroness of the same play[4] was inspired by a discourse that she rushed off to produce a pe fect work; and the Philosophe of the last act[5] had complete a book entitled *Amusement du sage*, in which he attempte to prove that education forms the basis of every man's re gion. Cassandre, of *Le Philosophe imaginaire*,[6] had publishe a book on the language of birds; M. Siphon, the physiocr of *La Physicienne*, had composed a pamphlet upon flours and his wife had presented to the Academy of Sciences St. Petersburg an article on the theory of aerostatic globes Finally, both Emilie and Cidalise, in *Les Philosoph modernes*,[9] were projecting books, the former upon the im mortality of the soul.

1. *Le faux Savant*, pp. 35 and 36.
2. *Les Philosophes* of 1742, p. 78.
3. *Les Philosophes*, Act I, scene v. See *supra*, p. 74.
4. *Le Sage*, p. 31.
5. *Le Sage*, p. 92.
6. *Le Philosophe imaginaire*, p. 24.
7. *La Physicienne*, p. 7.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
9. *Les Philosophes modernes*, p. 69.

he playwrights voiced three objections to this practice. Philosophe usurps the title of man of letters,[1] thereby stituting technical composition for artistic creation and fusing the public; he issues numerous works which pro-gate dangerous theories of government or of social organ-ion; and, finally, he is incompetent to deal with the jects he treats. Thus Philosophes turned authors or hors turned Philosophes devote themselves to tabooed or amiliar subjects, and spread vague, dangerous ideas which only discredit true knowledge, but also disintegrate ial institutions.

The cult of England is particularly criticized in *Crispin losophe* and in *L'Anglomane*. In the former play, one of principal characters, the Philosophe Valère, goes into tasy over everything English. News no sooner arrives t an English actor has come to Paris than Valère conceives lan to establish an English theatre. When Cléante shows prise at a statement that the English stage is superior to French stage, Valère exclaims: "Cléante, les Anglais ellent en tout, qui dit anglais dit admirable." He believes t French authors are pigmies compared with those of gland: "C'est là où on pense, où l'on approfondit, où l'on t." He prefers to read French books in English transla-s; he dresses with English broadcloth cut by English ors; he has, of course, English horses; and he considers gland the only place where an education can be obtained. counsels a study of English philosophy, which "gagne s les jours, et tout le monde s'en mêle." And, disappoint-in an excursion, he considers that he can find solace only a trip to England.

The characteristics of an anglomaniac, here considerably ggerated, are portrayed more charitably in *L'Anglo-*

[1] *Supra*, Chapter III, p. 33, note 1. Evidently at this time there was endency to identify Philosophe as synonymous with man of ers.

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mane,[1] although Eraste has much the same peculiarities Valère. The former dresses, eats, and toasts "à l'anglaise he has an English horse and an English garden; he believ everything in England sublime, nothing elsewhere beautif or useful. To Damis, a Frenchman masquerading as an En lishman, he exclaims: "Ma foi, vous nous passez en tout he goes wild over Shakespeare, whom he likes to hear quote but he is forced to read him in translation, for in contradi tinction to Valère he neither speaks nor reads English. A lastly, admiring England, the land of free thought, he fin much to criticize in France:

> Avons-nous des hommes en France?
> Des colifichets, et c'est tout.
> Les précepteurs du monde à Londres ont pris naissance
> C'est d'eux qu'il faut prendre leçon.
> Aussi je meurs d'impatience,
> D'y voyager. De par Newton,
> Je le verrai, ce pays où l'on pense.

The author explains in his preface wherein lies the dang from anglomania: « Je n'ai voulu attaquer que cet entho siasme aveugle de nos anglomanes, que cette espèce de cul qu'ils rendent aux auteurs anglais, peut-être moins pour l exalter, que pour rabaisser les nôtres. Ce travers prend source dans la jalousie secrète qu'on porte aux hommes célèbr de sa nation, jalousie qu'on ne s'avoue pas, mais qui n' est pas moins réelle." In other words, exaltation of Engla means a corresponding diminution of patriotism in Franc and a consequent endangering of the existence of the state.

Saurin's criticism of anglomania was in accord with th of his contemporaries. In 1764, just one year previous to t

1. *L'Anglomane ou l'Orpheline léguée*, comédie en un acte et vers libres, par M. Saurin, de l'Académie française. Représen devant Sa Majesté, à Fontainebleau, le jeudi 5 novembre 1772, ses comédiens français ordinaires, et à Paris, le mercredi 23 du mê mois. Paris, Duchesne, MDCCLXXIII. The play was first presented 1765, under the title of *L'Orpheline léguée*, comédie en trois actes. S preface to the play, p. III.

sentation of *L'Orpheline léguée*, Voltaire had written an
icle in which he exclaimed:[1] "Mille gens s'élèvent et
lament contre l'anglomanie." He continues: "J'ignore ce
ils entendent par ce mot; s'ils veulent parler de la fureur
travestir en modes ridicules quelques usages utiles, de
nsformer un déshabillé commode en un vêtement mal-
pre, de saisir jusqu'à des jeux nationaux pour y mettre
grimaces à la place de la gravité, ils pourraient avoir rai-
, mais si par hasard ces déclamateurs prétendaient nous
e un crime du désir d'étudier, d'observer, de philosopher,
nme les anglais, ils auraient certainement grand tort, car
supposant que ce désir soit déraisonnable ou même dange-
x, il faudrait avoir beaucoup d'humeur pour nous l'attri-
r et ne pas convenir que nous sommes à cet égard à l'abri de
t reproche." Thus Voltaire only in a measure agreed with
rin, but the *Journal encyclopédique*[2] agreed fully with
n: "Cette prévention folle d'imaginer qu'il n'est de pen-
rs qu'en Angleterre est absolument dans la nature de
nthousiasme ridicule que fronde M. Saurin." Even as late
1778, articles were still appearing in the periodicals on
glomania.[3]

Closely allied to the anglomania of Eraste and Valère is
cosmopolitanism of d'Alvalence and of the Baronne in *Le*
ge. D'Alvalence, with no regard for the fatherland, holds
t "L'esprit n'est pas borné dans un pays." The savants
France, according to him, are more English than the peers
England, more German than the soldiers of Frederick the
eat. He longs to dwell among the Chinese or, at least, on
banks of the Thames:[4] "Penser, parler, agir avec fran-
se, être homme enfin." Furthermore, he considers that
y three places exist where liberty is limitless and know-
ge boundless: London, Geneva, and Berlin.

. Voltaire, ed. Moland, Vol. XXV, p. 219.
. January, 1773, p. 102.
. *Mercure*, November 5, 1776, p. 70. The article is an extract from
Dictionnaire universel.
. *Le Sage*, p. 28.

Partout ailleurs, l'homme est lâche, inhumain,
Faux, crapuleux, esclave, qui se pique
D'aimer un Maître, une candeur gothique
Des préjugés, qu'il ne peut concevoir.

It is evident that he thinks the French are the most notabl representatives of the "genre faux, crapuleux, esclave."

The indiscriminate pursuit of learning among the Ph losophes had been criticized from the beginning of the mov ment. Polimatte, it will be remembered, is a univers savant, physicist, chemist, astronomer, philosopher, and cri ic. In *Le Cercle*, there is a "femme savante," closely co nected with the philosophic movement, who devotes h time to mathematics.[1] Cidalise, in *Les Philosophes*, conti ually consults Plato, *L'Encyclopédie*, and the recent popul editions. Damon, in the *Petit Philosophe*, and Narcisse, in *L Philosophe à la mode*, devote much of their time to study. fact, one of the important characteristics of a Philosophe i according to these plays, the ardor with which he devot himself to a broad list of studies: economics, astronom physics, mathematics, and geology.

The pedantry of the Philosophe is particularly exhibited four plays: *Le Philosophe imaginaire*,[2] *Les Philosophes im ginaires*,[3] *La Physicienne*,[4] and *La Philoso-manie*.[5] Ca

1. *Le Cercle*, scene IV.

2. *Le Philosophe imaginaire*, opéra bouffon, en trois actes, représe té pour la première fois à Paris aux Tuileries, et au Palais Royal 1780. Paroles de M. Dubuisson, musique del Sr. Paesiello. Bibl thèque Nationale, Mss., Fr. 9281.

3. *Les Philosophes imaginaires*, opéra bouffon, représenté pour première fois, en mars 1789, sur le Théâtre de M. A Paris, de l'i primerie de Monsieur. MDCCLXXXIX. Bibliothèque Mazarine, 467 *Les Philosophes imaginaires* is merely an adaptation of *Le Philosop imaginaire*. The names of the characters have been changed, one two new characters have been added, but the characterisation of t principal personages and the plot are essentially the same.

4. *La Physicienne*, comédie en un acte et en vers, représentée Théâtre Français, le 16 mars 1786. Par M. de la Montagne, auteur *L'Enthousiaste*. A Paris, chez Poinçot. MDCCLXXXVII. (The date giv *supra*, p. 3, for this play is erroneous.)

5. *La Philoso-manie*, comédie nouvelle en trois actes et en pro Mentioned in Brunet and in Soleinne, No. 3067, and in Omont, *M*

ıdre, in *Le Philosophe imaginaire*, is interested in the lan-
ıge of birds, the invisible philosopher's stone, and the
nufacture of certain drugs. Having devoted much time to
careful examination of the left eye of a wolf, he has now
three years been working upon an experiment in chem-
ry. Naturally, he has become so engrossed in his studies
t he has forgotten to find a husband for his daughter, and
ıen, eventually, a suitor appears who has no respect for
ridiculous idiosyncracies of the father, the latter, firmly
termined that his daughter shall marry a Philosophe of the
ne calibre as himself, refuses to accept him as a son-in-law.
The Philosophe is again portrayed as a pedantic scientist
La Physicienne. In the gathering there described, science
the rage, reports are read, and constant communication is
intained with the Academy of Sciences at Saint Petersburg.
e leader, Madame Siphon, is a scientific Madame Geoffrin.
hat is her character and her type of mind?

> De son sexe vraiment elle n'a que l'habit,
> Des savantes du jour c'est le parfait modèle;
> Elle parle physique, histoire naturelle,
> Aussi facilement que je prends du tabac.

e is seconded by the Abbé Phosphore, who is desirous
studying the volcanoes of Italy. M. Siphon, also a Philo-
ıhe, finds nothing more attractive than the study of agri-
ture; that is to say, he is a physiocrat. Finally, there is the
et Pasquin, Philosophe "physicien," recently initiated
o the science.

One can hardly read this play of La Montagne without
ıking of Madame du Châtelet, but no specific personal
ısions can be identified. What is attacked is the vulgarisa-
ı of science, especially as regards the inappropriateness
its spread among women. Madame Siphon in the last

, No. 9264. The title as given in the manuals, *La Philosophomanie*,
rroneous. I have found no reference to publishing, presentation,
author.

analysis is regarded as an eighteenth-century "femm savante." And there are, says the author, many of them:[1]

> On rencontre partout de ces pédans femelles,
> A qui sans contredit un grand bonnet carré
> Siérait mieux qu'un chapeau de plumes entouré;
> Leur langage baroque effarouche les grâces,
> Et fait fuir les Amours qui volaient sur leurs traces,
> Un air penseur succède à leurs airs étourdis;
> Tous leurs discours ne sont qu'un vrai salmigondis:
> C'est de l'air inflammable, et puis, du méphistime;
> L'huile de vitriol, le gas, le magnétisme.
> Je voudrais qu'en parlant cet étrange jargon,
> Il leur vînt tout à coup de la barbe au menton.

They are charlatans who by degrading knowledge a serving to bring philosophy into disrepute. Above all, the are freakish. Palissot has noted this defect in his "femm savante" portrait in *Le Cercle* and in Cidalise of *Les Philo sophes*. Rutlidge again noted it in his attack against th salon of Madame Geoffrin. It was naturally a popular subjec Molière had set the example in his *Femmes savantes*.

Whereas *La Physicienne* connects philosophy with th study of physics, the *Philoso-manie*, written about 1787 unites philosophy to the study of astronomy. The treatmen of the Philosophe in the latter is reminiscent of that of *L Philosophes* of 1742, where a whole family had becom mentally deranged by the study of systems, or of that *La Philosopho-manie ou Les Maladies de têtes à systèmes*

1. *La Physicienne*, Act I, scene III, p. 6.

2. In Act II, scene IX, M. de Sastrée says he is going to determi the average temperature of the winter of 1776 and the valet exclaim "Déterminer le froid qu'il faisait, il y a onze ans, je crois qu'il rêve In Act III, scene VII, there is a mention of the *Journal de Lingue* Linguet was editor of the *Journal de politique et de littérature* betwee October 25, 1774, and June 15, 1778. It then passed to La Harpe. C Quérard, *La France littéraire*.

3. The poem was later published at Rouen, without a date. Bib. Na Ye 20313. The author states in his preface, p. VI, that the poem w begun in 1760: "Dès 1760, j'arrêtai le plan de ma *Philosopho-mani* Je fus trois ans à composer mon poème, après quoi, me conformant

poem written in 1760 by Dières. M. de Sastrée of *La Philsomanie* is an astronomer who, having gone crazy over the tudy of Kepler, wishes to change his family into personified lanets in order to prove by experiment the theory of Ptolmy. From pure science, he has penetrated into the realm f metaphysical inquiry under the guidance of Descartes, Newton, Mersenne, and Buffon. He still maintains, however, hat philosophy can be reached only through the study of stronomy: "Et l'astronomie seule a le droit de vous conuire à la sublimité de la philosophie." And he has eliminaed all systems: "Rejetant tous les systèmes, je rends compte n me jouant des phénomènes qui jusqu'alors semblaient être u-dessus de l'effort de l'esprit humain. Je détermine les lonitudes, j'explique victorieusement la rétrogradation des stres, le flux et le reflux de l'océan. Je nie tout, le vide, le lein, l'attraction, la répulsion, les forces vives, etc." Finally, e has dabbled with the philosopher's stone, the transfusion f blood, and magnetism.[1] There is, however, another side o his character: while he is sententious and obdurate, he as attempted to preserve such philosophical virtues as faith n the intellect, stoicism in the face of adversity, repression f the passions, and belief that the task of man is to render ankind more happy.

This mania for philosophy, though apparently harmless, is, Madame de Sastrée points out in the *Philosomanie*, dangerus. First, it makes egotists. Interested in dreams, M. de astrée becomes self-centred and forgets the needs of his amily. He has a daughter to give in marriage, a wife to aintain, and a lawsuit to defend. He ignores his daughter, is wife, and his lawsuit while he goes into ecstasy over the ws of Kepler. Moreover, it is not alone in his family duties

récepte d'Horace, je le laissai reposer dans mon pupitre, cherchant en uelque sorte à l'oublier... Je le savais plein de vérités dures contre les ois, les ministres, les grands, surtout contre certaine sorte de gens qui e disent Philosophes, quoiqu'à moi, ils ne m'aient jamais paru mériter en porter le nom."

1. Magnetism is also ridiculed in *La Physicienne.*

that he fails: "Ne tenant qu'à lui-même, [il] ne connaît plus ni son Dieu, ni son Roi, ni sa patrie." Second, his so-called science is futile, it is but a "vain étalage de pompeux galimatias." What has been the effect of all this fine philosophy? Has it improved mankind? Is human nature more pliable because of it? Hardly! "Chaque individu fait de lui-même un centre où se rapportent tous les rayons de son étroite circonférence; le plus grand de tes philosophes dont l'univers idolâtre la mémoire a traîné indignement ses enfants dans un hôpital."[1] Third, the principles of philosophy are too powerful for feeble minds. Instruct valets in them and they become vicious, popularize the doctrines and the ideas appear absurd. Why not leave them, then, to those who are qualified by training and talent to pursue them, and accept a middle-class philosophy? M. de Sastrée, finally converted to this way of thinking of his wife, says: "Je mets bas les armes, j'abjure mes erreurs, et je promets de faire consister désormais toute ma philosophie à répandre le bonheur."

To the mania depicted in *La Philosomanie* is united in certain plays another fad popular among the members of the Philosophic Party, the formation of "bureaux d'esprit" for the purpose of discussing the works and ideas of the sect. In a certain way, these "bureaux" are already to be found in Mainvilliers' two plays, where eight popular authors of the time gather around a table presided over by Madame Dubongoût or by Madame Tripaudière as the first "cercle" of which we find any indication in the drama. In the *Philosophes* of 1742, there was already a sort of school of philosophy formed by Etourdi, Socrate and a whole group of disciples, at the home of Madame Bérinte. In *Le Cercle*,[2] Palissot's "femme savante" mentions "un cercle où je présidais." But the method whereby the popular seventeenth-century salon was gradually transformed into the philosophical lyceum of the

1. Evidently a reference to Jean-Jacques Rousseau.
2. Scene IV.

ghteenth century was not disclosed in any play until the ppearance of Palissot's *Philosophes* (1760), where Marton xplained to Damis that Cidalise has reformed her style of ving:[1]

> Madame a depuis peu réformé sa maison.
> Nous n'extravaguons plus qu'à force de raison.
> D'abord on a banni cette gaîté grossière,
> Délices des traitans, aliment du vulgaire;
> A nos soupés décens tout au plus on sourit,
> Si l'on s'ennuie, au moins c'est avec de l'esprit.
> Quelquefois on admet, au lieu de vaudevilles,
> De savans concerto, de grands airs difficiles:
> Car il faut bien encore un peu d'amusement,
> Mais notre fort, Monsieur, c'est le raisonnement,
> Quelque tems dans le cercle on parla politique,
> Enfin tout disparut sous la métaphysique.

utlidge gave an additional portrait of the bureau in action n his *Bureau d'esprit*, and La Montagne added another in *a Physicienne*.

As presented in the plays, the menace in these "bureaux 'esprit" lies in social disintegration due to the introduction nto society of scoundrels and schemers. Palissot endeavored o show how easily a cynical schemer could turn the head of respectable lady like Cidalise, and upset the normal course f family life. Others opposed to the philosophic movement eem to have regarded the transformation of salons into bureaux d'esprit" and the entrance therein of Philosophes ith the same disapproval which conservatives would mani- st toward the admittance of "parlor Bolsheviks" into their rawing-rooms. Then too the opponents pointed out the uses o which the Philosophe would put the "bureaux." They ffered a center for discussion and propaganda. From the alon of the "femme savante" went forth treatises on physics pproved by M. du Volcan; from that of Cidalise, there is ent forth a large volume on the conduct of government; from

1. *Les Philosophes*, Act I, scene 1.

the drawing-rooms of Madame de Folincourt and of Madame Siphon are disseminated throughout Europe all kinds of pernicious doctrines. They further offered an opportunity for concerted defensive measures. In Cidalise's salon, there are Théophraste, Valère, and Dortidius united to meet an attack from a common enemy. Similar scenes occur in Rutlidge's play, in Poinsinet's *Le petit Philosophe* and in Dorat's *Les Prôneurs*. Thus what was lightly ridiculed as a fashionable fad came to be regarded by several playwrights as a serious menace to the organisation of society.

The playwrights pointed out that through the "bureaux d'esprit" there was encouraged among the Philosophes a practice of extolling each other at the expense of those who did not belong to the party. In *Les Philosophes* of Palissot, Dortidius was censured for his tendency to exalt the work of Cidalise to the skies, not because of its value but because Cidalise was his student in philosophy. In *Les Philosophes de bois*, M. Fagot[1] assures M. Sapin that "il est bien doux de s'entrepasser la louange," and thereupon they agree to flatter each other incessantly. Later,[2] M. Fagot gives instructions to Polichinelle:

> Songe à te mettre bien chez tous nos beaux esprits,
> A tout ce qui vient d'eux rends un aveugle hommage,
> Et, surtout, ne va pas admirant nos écrits
> T'engourdir, et ronfler à la première page.

This *esprit de corps* among the Philosophes, according to the dramatists, would be justifiable if it did not lead the members of the party to dictate to the public what should be lauded and what condemned. In *Les Philosophes*, in *Le petit Philosophe*, and in *Le Bureau d'esprit*, we find the party engaged in a cabal to bring about the failure of a certain play. This dictatorial spirit was especially emphasized in *Les*

1. *Les Philosophes de bois*, p. 8.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Prôneurs[1] of Dorat, where a club has been formed to decide which literary works are to succeed and which to fail. The group has a chief, Callidès, ably seconded by his little lieutenants Célimène, Bélise, Fatmé, Durcet, Furet, Versac, and Froussin. They have composed a blackball list which Callidès presents to the assembly:[2]

Ça, parlons à présent,
Sur un point qui pour nous est plus intéressant.
L'amour-propre est partout. Grâce à notre artifice
Dans le cœur le plus dur la louange se glisse;
Elle y coule, s'étend, l'épanouit enfin,
Quand il est bien loué, l'hébété se croit fin.
Mais en louant les uns, on révolte les autres.
Je m'y suis attendu, la Secte a ses apôtres:
Elle a ses ennemis; il faut nous en venger,
Et faire repentir qui nous ose outrager.
Egoïstes humains, persécuteurs paisibles,
Vous qui brillez, surtout, par les incompatibles,
Quelques jaloux obscurs se glissent dans Paris,
Et j'apporte à vos yeux la table des proscrits.

The assembly comes to grief, thanks to the stupidity of its members, but the practice is held not only questionable but dangerous.

Thus we see that various practices were singled out among the new philosophers which were considered to be as dangerous as the doctrines and ideas they preached. It seemed to the dramatists that the craze for writing books had flooded the market with inaccurate, pernicious treatises on economic and political subjects; that the practice of worshiping England and disparaging France had turned respectable citizens and patriots into traitors to their country and was

1. *Les Prôneurs ou le Tartuffe littéraire*, comédie en trois actes en vers. Par M. Dorat. "Le Philosophe est seul, et l'imposteur fait secte." En Hollande et se trouve à Paris, chez Delalain, libraire, rue et à côté de l'ancienne Comédie Française. MDCCLXXVII. This play was revised and published later under the title *Merlin bel esprit*. The unrevised play can be found in the Columbia University Library.

2. *Les Prôneurs*, Act II, scene III.

destroying the idea of Fatherland by fostering internationalism; that pedantry had supplanted science, and had consumed the time of many individuals who would have done better to apply themselves to the more humble tasks of life; that the organisation of "bureaux d'esprit" had offered to the Philosophes an opportunity to group together more closely into a *secte*, to further the ideas and the reputations of members of the party, and to practice the intolerance which they condemned in their opponents.[1]

1. See letter of Madame du Deffand to Voltaire, ed. Moland, Vol. XLVI, p. 221.

CHAPTER VII

THE COUNTER-OFFENSIVE (1749-1764)

The plays which attacked the Philosophe had their origin
the belief that he either professed doctrines or maintained
actices which, coupled with his evident insincerity and
parent insufficiency of training, were a menace to society.
ese charges had been succinctly drawn up.[1] How were they
et? The reply, though in some respects inadequate, was
ompt. After the presentation of *Les Philosophes* in 1760,
e Philosophic Party fairly deluged the opposing party with
mphlets, poems, letters, discourses,[2] and even engravings.[3]
mong the attempts at a reply there was only a small number
plays. Cailleau made two feeble efforts in *Les Philosophes*
anqués and in *Les Fourbes punis*. Cahusac's *Zoroastre* and
iderot's *Père de famille* were interpreted by the public as
n answer to the opponents of the party. Voltaire, both in
Ecossaise and in *Socrate*, seizing the weapon employed by
alissot, used personal satire in the defense of the cause.
stly, both Sauvigny and Linguet elaborated upon Voltaire's
eatment of *Socrate*.

The first response to the charges brought by Palissot and
s group was made before the 15th of May, 1760,[4] in Cail-
au's[5] *Philosophes manqués*.[6] Cailleau, scandalized by Palis-

1. See *supra*, Chapter I.
2. See Delafarge, *Palissot, sa vie et son œuvre* (1912), Bibliographie, xv, section VI: "Pièces polémiques sur Palissot ou publiées à l'occasion ses œuvres."
3. *Les Philosophes manqués*, third edition, p. 32, carries a list of Estampes gravées en taille douce, qui ont paru sur le même sujet."
4. Delafarge, *op. cit.*, p. 207, note 1.
5. Cailleau, A. C. (1731-98), bookseller and author.
6. *Les Philosophes manqués*, comédie nouvelle en un acte et en prose. Ridentem dicere verum, quid vetat?" A Criticomanie, chez la Satyre, e des bons avis, à la vérité. MDCCLX. Mentioned in *Anecdotes dra-*

sot's allegations, determined, as he declared in the preface to the third edition, to avenge honest men maliciously maligned: "Nous croyons devoir avertir le lecteur que cette comédie a été faite "currente calamo," l'auteur étant extrêmement révolté contre la pièce de M. P., qui attaque des savants à qui on ne peut rien reprocher, ni sur la probité, ni sur les mœurs."

The play is rather an indictment of Palissot than a defense of the Philosophic Party. Cailleau asserted that Palissot was a knave and a grafter and seemed to think that this would clear the Philosophes of the accusation brought against them. Consequently, numerous are the charges against the author of the *Philosophes*. The latter's sincerity is questioned by the suggestion that he wishes only to make a name for himself at the expense of others.[1] He is adjudged devoid of imagination and invention; besides, he has shown gross ingratitude to his benefactors.[2] The characters he painted in *Les Philosophes* have never existed within the Philosophic Party. "Sont-ce des philosophes que vous avez peints, ou des fourbes que vous décorez du nom de philosophes?" In short, by turning philosophy to ridicule, he has committed a crime against the laws, the public, and the magistrates. Even the doctrine of self-interest which he had condemned in the Philosophes he himself has accepted, not, however, with the interpretation Helvétius had placed upon it, but altered to fit his personal advantage.[3]

That Palissot wrote a play devoid of intrigue, interest, and denouement, as Cailleau maintained, does not prove that the Philosophes are not "fourbes" and "fripons" as Palissot gave to understand. That Palissot showed poor taste and base ingratitude towards former benefactors does not exonerate his victims. Nor, finally, can the latter find any justification for

matiques, Supplement, p. 451; *Dictionnaire portatif*, p. 348; Desnoiresterres, p. 132.

1. *Les Philosophes manqués*, p. 7.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

emselves in the fact that Palissot has accepted as the basis his own philosophy their doctrine of personal interest. nsequently Favart was right when, on the 18th of May, 1760, wrote, regarding the Philosophes, to the Count Durazzo:[1] e qu'on a fait jusqu'à présent pour leur défense ne mérite s d'être cité, par conséquent je ne ferai point l'analyse des *ilosophes manqués*, petite pièce manquée que l'on attribue M. Brunet."[2]

Cailleau's second play, *Les Originaux ou les Fourbes punis*,[3] ntioned by Hémery on July 17, 1760,[4] was no more effective. lleau had conceived the idea of taking Palissot's plot and aracters and of reworking them from the point of view of a ilosophe. He changed the names Dortidius, Théophraste, l Valère to Stipolas, Renfor and Tinpisone, anagrams of lissot, Fréron and Poinsinet. Instead of being called Philo- hes, the characters are called "originaux," a possible allusion Palissot's play of 1755. Instead of the literary productions Diderot and of Rousseau which are mentioned in the *Phi- ophes*, the works of Palissot, Fréron, and Poinsinet are sub tuted. The rest is merely Palissot's play miserably rehashed. certain places whole passages, such as Valère's speech- personal interest or Théophraste's tirade on the unification the sect, both of which are plausibly applicable to the ilosophes, are put into the mouths of the opponents, where y have no significance. Obviously, as a defense of the se, Cailleau's play was a failure.

There persisted a feeling on the part of the public, and of Philosophes themselves, that a play must be written by a mber of the party which would constitute an adequate

. Favart, *Mémoires et correspondance*, Vol. I, p. 38.

. The same thing could be said of *Le Procès des ariettes et des vaude- es* composed by Favart and Anseaume and given at the Foire Saint- rent in 1760. See Favart, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 32.

. *Les Originaux ou les Fourbes punis*, parodie scène par scène des tendus Philosophes, comédie nouvelle en trois actes et en vers par *** d'aucune Académie ni de société. "Quid Rides? Mutate nomine de abula narratur?" Horat. Sat. A Nancy. MDCCLX.

. Delafarge, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

reply to Palissot and his supporters. In the pamphlets, as well as in the poems and satires, the Philosophe had not only maintained his prestige, he had literally overwhelmed his opponent, but the galling fact remained that on the stage he had failed to defend himself. The party sought its oracle: the reply to its traducers must come from Voltaire. D'Alembert had given utterance to the general feeling on the 6th of May:[1] "C'est à vous, mon cher maître, qui êtes à la tête des lettres, qui avez si bien mérité de la philosophie, et sur qui la pièce tombe plus peut-être que sur personne, c'est à vous, qui n'avez rien à craindre, à venger l'honneur des gens de lettres outragés."

Finally, on the 26th of July, Voltaire presented his *Ecossaise*.[2] The play had been written before Palissot's attack, and was published before the 19th of May.[3] Consequently Voltaire's original intention could not have been to defend the Philosophes against their aggressors; he had wished only to crush his adversary Fréron. The adherents of the party sensed none the less in the presentation an opportunity to further their ends. After all, was not Fréron one of their enemies? Had he not, in 1755, incited Palissot to depict Rousseau in *Les Originaux?* Had he not, while finding a few details to criticize in the *Philosophes*, maintained that Palissot's play was not only good but timely? And had not his periodical, the *Année littéraire*, shown itself extremely hostile to the new philosophy? D'Alembert had done his utmost to have Fréron annihilated in 1755; Voltaire, in *L'Ecossaise*, now chose a more effective way to crush him. Accordingly the Philosophes packed the Comédie Française on the night of the first performance, and with cries of "triomphe, victoire, victoire complète," they deluded themselves into believing their opponents silenced

1. Voltaire, ed. Moland, Vol. XL, p. 380.
2. *L'Ecossaise*, comédie en cinq actes par M. Hume, traduite en français par Jérome Carré; représentée pour la première fois, sur le Théâtre Français, le 26 juillet 1760. "J'ai vengé l'univers autant que je l'ai pu."
3. Voltaire, ed. Moland, Vol. V, p. 400.

use a poor devil had been treated harshly by an implacable
my.

study of Voltaire's play will show that there are but few
ts of analogy between *Les Philosophes* and *L'Ecossaise*.
ssot had transformed Diderot into Dortidius; Voltaire took
milar liberty in changing Fréron to Frélon and then to
sp. Palissot had criticized Dortidius and his comrades as
esentatives of a sect against which he brought certain
ific charges. Voltaire, on the contrary, assailed Fréron as
ndividual; consequently at no point does Voltaire's attack
nst Fréron coincide with Palissot's criticism of Dortidius.
reover, at no point in the play is the editor of *L'Année*
raire ridiculed as an opponent of the Encyclopedists. Of
the epithets given him— "écrivain de feuilles, fripon,
aud, lézard, couleuvre, araignée, langue de vipère, esprit
ravers, cœur de boue, méchant, faquin, impudent, lâche,
uin, espion, dogue"— none bore on his attitude toward
er the Philosophes or their antagonists. In fact, there are
three allusions (Act I, scene III) to the Philosophes in
whole play and not one of the three is an attempt at a
ification of the sect.

here is in *L'Ecossaise* a character who might have served
purpose, had Voltaire chosen to stress him as a typical
losophe. That character is Freeport, the brusque, coarse,
somewhat ill-mannered merchant who has no regard for
k, who desires simplicity, and who possesses the virtues
nonesty, common sense and humanitarianism. This Freeport
many respects resembles the father in *Le Père de famille*,
Van Derk in *Le Philosophe sans le savoir*.[1] In no place in
play, however, is he characterized as a Philosophe, and it
s not seem to have occurred to Voltaire to make a comparison
ween Freeport's ideals and those of the Encyclopedic Party;
in any event, in his desire to crush Fréron, he let the
portunity pass. After all, his object was to avenge the

[1] See *supra*, Introduction.

treatment he had received at the hands of a pamphleteer, and his attention was too narrowly focused upon that particular pamphleteer for his play to constitute an answer to the attacks upon the Philosophic Party.

Thus, as a refutation of the indictment brought by Palissot and his group, *L'Ecossaise* is as unsatisfactory as the two plays of Cailleau. Nowhere in the play are the specific charges of Palissot answered. Nowhere is a character presented as the real philosopher. The play exemplified merely Voltaire's use of the same questionable weapons which had been employed by adversaries of the *Encyclopédie*.

Voltaire promised in his preface, written in the form of a letter, to renew the attack and to clear the field of all the vile detractors of his followers:[1] "Je crois, mon cher Hume, que vous avez encore quelque talent; vous en êtes comptable à la nation: c'est peu d'avoir immolé ce vilain Frélon à la risée publique sur tous les théâtres de l'Europe, où l'on joue votre aimable et vertueuse Ecossaise: faites plus; mettez sur la scène tous ces vils persécuteurs de la littérature, tous ces hypocrites noircis de vices, et calomniateurs de la vertu; traînez sur le théâtre, devant le tribunal du public, ces fanatiques enragés qui jettent leur écume sur l'innocence, et ces hommes faux, qui vous flattent d'un œil et qui vous menacent de l'autre, qui n'osent parler devant un philosophe, et qui tâchent de le détruire en secret; exposez au grand jour des détestables cabales qui voudraient replonger les hommes dans les ténèbres." Did Voltaire mean by this letter to the supposititious brother of David Hume that *L'Ecossaise* was only one of a group of plays in each of which the author hoped to devote himself to the execution of an opponent of the Philosophes? Or did he have in mind some future presentation of *Socrate*? At all events, the plays were never written.

As a matter of fact, the Encyclopedic Party was handicapped in its efforts to answer upon the comic stage the charges of

1. Voltaire, ed. Moland, Vol. V, p. 418.

adversaries; for, while French comedy adapted itself fairly
l to the policies of the party in the propagation of ideas,[1]
comedy of character was ill-designed for the purpose of
emics. It was relatively easy to so present the types selected
o render them ridiculous or odious;[2] it was correspondingly
ficult effectively to bring home their good points.[3] Hence,
he Philosophes' two attempts in the comedy of character,
s not surprising that they did not succeed in giving an
quate reply to the opponents of the sect.

The newly-invented *drame*, however, would have suited
needs of the party. When, in 1761, Diderot presented his
re de famille,[4] it is reported that some one, after the
formance, characterised the play as the best reply which
ld be given to his opponents, and that Diderot exclaimed
t he had expected a comment of the sort. While the *Père
famille* was published before the Philosophes were fully
broiled in the struggle, Diderot was correct in esteeming
drame a favorable medium for conducting their defence,
the party does not seem to have availed itself of this
apon.[5]

The Encyclopedists, however, made a series of attempts in
gedy, the genre in which they had been so successful in the
pagation of their ideas. Pure tragedy demanded some
nblance of historical verisimilitude: if they could find a
secuted philosopher of antiquity who was recognized as
uous, they could present to the Parisian public their
ception of the Philosophe struggling against unfair odds

1. See Fontaine, L., *Le Théâtre et la philosophie au XVIII^e siècle*. Paris
audry, 1879.
2. D'Alembert, *Lettre à Rousseau*.
3. This could be done by contrast, as in the case of Molière's *Misan-
ope*.
4. *Le Père de famille*, comédie en cinq actes et en prose, avec un
ours sur la poésie dramatique. 1758. See Diderot, *Oeuvres*, ed.
ezat, Vol. VII, p. 172. Voltaire wrote: "Je regarde le succès du *Père
famille* comme une victoire que la vertu a remportée et comme une
nde honorable que le public fait d'avoir souffert l'infâme satire
tulée *La Comédie des Philosophes*."
5. See *supra*, Introduction.

for the good of humanity. An effort at realization had been made as early as 1749, when Cahusac presented at the Académie Royale de Musique the opera *Zoroastre*.[1] Zoroastre, according to the preface of the play, is a sort of Philosophe: "Il fut l'instituteur des mages, les premiers philosophes de la terre." He originated the principle of the constant combat between good (Orosmane) and evil (Ariman). "Un personnage," says the author, "aussi célèbre par ses principes et par ses actions, les révolutions qu'il a causées dans les esprits, la puissance surnaturelle que les traditions anciennes lui attribuent, les biens sans nombre qu'il a répandus sur l'humanité, ont paru le champ le plus fertile pour un théâtre qui mériterait d'être connu." Then follows an outline of the plot: "On oppose à Zoroastre un prêtre ambitieux, ministre farouche du mauvais principe, on le suppose l'inventeur de cette magie dont le pouvoir redoutable émane des esprits de ténèbres. La force du sujet offre ainsi d'elle-même le spectacle de la vertu, toujours persécutée et jamais abattue, triomphante même au moment même où l'artifice, la haine, la vengeance ont porté son infortune jusqu'aux dernières périodes du malheur."

The Encyclopedic Party of 1755-60 could look with considerable favor on this play, but it had handicaps which prevented it from being of any considerable service. It reached only a limited class, Zoroastre being as unknown to the average Parisian as Tithonus would be to the average American, and a libretto, where the words must fit the music, was ill-adapted to propaganda. Consequently, although *Zoroastre* really presented the philosophic side of the quarrel, the members of the party were forced to seek a more popular example of virtue persecuted by knavery.

They had not far to seek. Palissot had no sooner written *Les Philosophes* than he prophesied that he would be called

1. *Zoroastre*, opéra réprésenté pour la première fois par l'Académie Royale de Musique le 5 décembre 1749 et remis au théâtre le mardi 20 janvier, 1756. A Paris, MDCCLVI.

e Aristophanes of the French stage, and Favart published epigram written for the occasion which began:[1]

> Un petit grec, singe d'Aristophane,
> Veut l'imiter dans ses emportements.

a playwright attacking the Philosophe is the eighteenth-ntury Aristophanes, it is but a step to identify the Philosophe Socrates. In fact the term Socrates seems to have been plied to the adherents of Voltaire even before the term ristophanes was applied to their traducers. On April 25, 60, Voltaire wrote to D'Alembert regarding Palissot's play: Est-ce possible qu'on laisse jouer cette farce impudente dont nous menace? C'est ainsi qu'on s'y prit pour perdre Socrate." fter the presentation of the play, he pitied "ces pauvres crates."[2] The term was later employed by others: in the sue of the *Journal encyclopédique* for September, 1760,[3] ere was a discourse entitled *Un Disciple de Socrate aux Athé-ens*, and a discourse published in August of the same year[4] mpares Socrates and Aristophanes with the Philosophes d their opponents.

There were striking parallels between Socrates and the ghteenth-century Encyclopedists. He, like them, had tried overthrow the superstitions which had grown out of natural enomena; he, too, was considered a corrupter of youth, the stigator of a pernicious doctrine, and a menace to recognized cial institutions. Like Diderot and Rousseau, he had been diculed upon the comic stage, but had persisted steadfastly his work. His virtues— simplicity, desire to extend the ntiers of knowledge, fearlessness in his attacks upon perstitions, generosity, true devotion to the state and its ws— were those which the Philosophes of 1760 wished to ve considered as their attributes. Accordingly, the most

1. Favart, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 31.
2. Voltaire, ed. Moland, Vol. XL, p. 418.
3. P. 114.
4. P. 105.

effective reply to the opponents of the party was destined to be made in the domain of tragedy. In 1759, Voltaire published his *Socrate*.[1] Between the years 1760 and 1761, having hopes that it would be played, he revised and republished it. No sooner had the news of Palissot's *Philosophes* arrived at Ferney than he deftly suggested to Lekain that *Socrate* could be furnished on short notice.[2] To D'Argental, who had evidently suggested staging *La Mort de Socrate*, he replied:[3] "Vous êtes un homme bien hardi de vouloir faire jouer *La Mort de Socrate*; vous êtes un anti-Anitus. Mais que dira Maître Anitus Joly de Fleury? Ce *Socrate* est un peu fortifié depuis longtemps par de nouvelles scènes, par des additions dans le dialogue. Toutes ces additions ne tendent qu'à rendre les persécuteurs plus ridicules et plus exécrables; mais aussi elles ne contribueront pas à les désarmer." And again to the same person: "Décidez pour *Socrate*, pour *l'Ecossaise*, je ferai tout ce qu'il faudra." As late as July 25, *Socrate* is still heading the list of plays in waiting:[4] "Je ne sais plus que devenir; je suis entre *Socrate*, *l'Ecossaise*, *Médime*, *Tancrède*, et *le Droit du seigneur*. Vous avez réglé l'ordre du service, tous les plats sont prêts; mais on ne peut mettre en vers *Socrate*, à cause de la multiplicité des acteurs." Voltaire had intrigued skilfully, but *Socrate* never saw the stage.

The satirical intention of Voltaire's *Socrate* is evident. La Harpe noted that the play is modern rather than ancient, and that the author, with his eyes turned towards Paris, sometimes seems to forget that his play represents Athens, the Areopagus, and the priests of Ceres. Voltaire himself suggests that he has

1. *Socrate*, ouvrage dramatique en trois actes traduit de l'anglais de feu M. Thompson par feu M. Fatéma, comme on sait. 1759. The play was written in June of that year. The preface is predated 1755. See Moland, Vol. V, p. 361.

2. Voltaire, ed. Moland, Vol. XL, p. 381: "Vous avez, dit-on, envie de jouer la *Mort de César* et celle de *Socrate*. *Socrate* ne passera point. Cependant, si on le veut absolument, il faudra s'y prêter, à condition que l'auteur de *Socrate* le rende plus susceptible du théâtre de Paris."

3. Voltaire, ed. Moland, Vol. XL, p. 395.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. XL, p. 478.

ntemporary Paris in view. M. Fatéma, i. e. Voltaire, assures
s that "la mort de Socrate aurait fait peu d'impression peut-
re dans un pays où l'on ne persécute personne pour sa reli-
ion et où la tolérance a si prodigieusement augmenté la popu-
tion et les richesses ainsi que la Hollande, ma chère Patrie."[1]
I. Fatéma was correct: the *Mort de Socrate* is adaptable to
ne country— France— and to one period— 1760-70.
Iaître Anitus is a strange priest of Ceres, with his "quelques
azetiers de controverse, quelques folliculaires qui viennent
ouvent dîner." The names of the "gazetiers"— Nonoti, the
defatigable; Chomos, the profound; and Bertios, the delicate
ho has slain Socrates with a word in his little *Journal*—
ave decidedly a French flavor.[2] The second judge, Melitus,
ho, knowing Anitus to be a scoundrel and to have no
lusions concerning himself, forms a pact with his enemy in
der to kill Socrates, "qui peut nous faire tort à l'un et à
autre en nous démasquant," is quite different from the histor-
ally repentant Melitus, dupe of his high office.

Voltaire preserved, in his characterization of Socrates, the
udable traits, for therein lay his reply to his opponents.
Vhile he modernizes him considerably, he maintains in their
ntirety the rugged, sterling qualities of the man. Socrates,
ccused of corrupting the young men of his time, is merely
inging them into accord with the laws of nature and of
ate; accused of a pernicious doctrine, he is simply expounding
doctrine consisting of common sense and fearless truth-
lness; accused of violating the laws of the state, he respects
e law of the land even when it is avowedly unjust. No! This
an is not dangerous. He has been grossly maligned; he is the
ctim of a renegade priest who seeks to sustain superstitions

1. Voltaire, ed. Moland, Vol. V, p. 362.
2. Understand Nonotte, Chaumeix and Berthier, the latter the director
the *Journal de Trévoux*. Chaumeix was the author of the *Oracle des
ouveaux philosophes* as well as of the *Mémoire* to Joly de Fleury concern-
g the *Encyclopédie*. The whole of this scene (Act II, scene III) was
ded in 1761 after the appearance of the *Philosophes*.

because superstitions sustain him, of a renegade judge, of a knavish pamphleteer and of a stupid gazetteer.

Voltaire was never more serious, never more satirical, and also never more flippant. The merchant woman Drixa who cries out: "C'est un hérétique; il nie la pluralité des dieux; il est déiste, il ne croit qu'un seul dieu; c'est un athée"; the judge who is "bien aise, après tout, de faire mourir un philosophe: ces gens-là ont une certaine fierté dans l'esprit, qu'il est bon de mâter un peu"; another judge who confides: "Entre nous, Socrate a raison; mais il a tort d'avoir raison si publiquement"; a third judge who would condemn all geometricians who pretend that three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles and thereby "scandalisent étrangement la populace occupée à lire leurs livres,"— these are characteristic creations of Voltaire an humor interspersed throughout an intensely serious effort to vindicate the Philosophe.

Whereas Voltaire, for all his efforts, could not secure the production of his *Socrate*, Sauvigny succeeded in staging his *Mort de Socrate*[1] at the Comédie Française. He waited, however, for over two years[2] before permission was granted

1. *La Mort de Socrate*, tragédie en trois acte (*sic*) et en vers, représentée pour la première fois sur le Théâtre Français au mois de Mai, 1763. Par M. de Sauvigny. A Paris, chez Prault fils, libraire. Quai de Conti vis-à-vis la descente du pont neuf, à la Charité. MDCCLXIII. Avec approbation et privilège du Roi. Mentioned in Desnoiresterres as a defense of *Emile* and *Le Contrat social*. Cf.: "Sa tragédie était... une réplique au *Philosophes* de Palissot, une revanche du parti encyclopédique sur le parti de la cour."

2. Favart, *Mémoires et correspondance*, July 7, 1760: "Les mêmes comédiens doivent nous donner cette semaine *La Mort de Socrate*, tragédie par M. de Sauvigny, garde du corps du roi Stanislas. Cette pièce vient d'être arrêtée à la Police. On a cru remarquer des allusions et des personnalités... Entre autres personnalités, on a saisi celles qui regardent Palissot. Il y est dépeint odieusement sous les traits d'Aristophane persécuteur de Socrate et des Philosophes. On ne peut se méprendre à l'application."

On June 29, 1762, Bachaumont wrote: "Il est décidé que *La Mort de Socrate* sera retirée, la police ne veut point absolument en permettre la représentation." And on March 23, 1763: "Le *Socrate* de Sauvigny après bien des contradictions doit se jouer à la rentrée. On avait d'abord exigé qu'il supprimât une tirade contre Aristophane comme désignant trop particulièrement le Sr. Palissot; la Marquise de Villeroi avait assuré

or its performance, and even then was forced to consent that ertain passages, regarded as obnoxious, be suppressed. The irade about Aristophanes, which could apply to no one save Palissot, was deleted entirely, and, when in 1763 the play ppeared, no word in the preface intimated that it was intended s a reply to the detractors of the party.

Sauvigny's play consists of three distinct parts: a summary f the charges brought against the Philosophe; a reply to hese charges; and an idealized portrait of the Philosophe as epresented by the hero. The summary of the charges is given y Anitus in the fourth scene: Socrates has failed to recognize aw, religion and the state, and he has corrupted the youth. n answer, Sauvigny puts into the mouth of Socrates an pology, but it is no longer the *Apology* of Plato. Socrates onsiders that gods created for political purposes, personal nterest, and ignorance lie at the root of religion, and desires hat the immortal torch of philosophy shed its light to the ttermost ends of the earth, "et fasse le bonheur de cent peuples divers."[1] The idealized portrait of the Philosophe is given by Criton who concludes by citing the deeds of Socrates:[2]

> Que vous connoissez mal un Philosophe, un Sage,
> Les troubles, les complots, ne sont pas son ouvrage,
> La paix est le seul but qu'il propose aux mortels ;
> Il combat les erreurs sans briser des autels.
> Imitateur de l'être éternel et suprême,
> Il a fait des heureux, il dut l'être lui-même.
> Simple dans ses dehors, modeste en ses discours,
> Il plaint qui le noircit, pardonne à qui l'opprime ;
> Son nom fait son malheur, sa gloire fit son crime.
> Aux complots des méchans n'opposant que ses mœurs,
> A force de vertus il subjugua les cœurs.

Sauvigny's *Mort de Socrate* was followed one year later by

auteur qu'il ne serait point représenté sans cela. Après bien des pourparlers il a rayé à regret le morceau où ce méchant était particulièrement caractérisé."

1. *La Mort de Socrate*, p. 20.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Linguet's *Socrate*,[1] which, like Voltaire's play, was never performed. Linguet was accused of representing the fall of the Jesuit party in the fallen Socrates. He denied the accusation:[2] "A tant de soumission, de grandeur d'âme, et d'humanité, je demande, si ceux qui ont condamné les soi-disants pourraient es reconnaître? Socrate n'est donc pas jésuite... Si l'on avait pu se flatter de trouver dans ma pièce quelque allégorie, ce serait certainement celle de l'illustre Jean-Jacques Rousseau." Accordingly, by the avowal of its author, one more Socrate play arose in defense of a Philosophe, and, thereby, in defense of the party. It is, however, only in the vaguest way that allusions are made to Rousseau.

Linguet differs considerably from Sauvigny in the emphasis laid upon the characters. Sauvigny had attempted to emphasize in the character of Socrates the traits which proved conclusively that the charges brought against him were false, while the various motives behind those charges, such as the jealousy of Anitus or the hatred of Melitus, are but vaguely treated. In Linguet's play, on the contrary, the motives underlying the persecution of Socrates are closely examined. Of greater importance than the character of Socrates is the character of Anitus, source of all of Socrates' persecution. The cause of the persecution, as outlined by Anitus, is as follows: in all times there have been philosophers who were prattling fools, but there has now arisen one who, proclaiming truth as his goal and reason as his guide, is threatening the foundations of an institution built upon superstition and falsehood,[3] institution which at the expense of a toiling multitude has enriched the few and which must be supported and avenged. Thus Linguet maintains that, in the name of Religion, the high priest Anitus destroyed Socrates for refusing to acknowledge a power built upon falsehood. The climax is reached when Anitus reveals

1. *Socrate*, tragédie en cinq actes, à Amsterdam, chez Marc-Michel Rey. MDCCLXIV. Dedication to Madame la Comtesse d'Humbecque.
2. *Journal encyclopédique*, 1764, Vol. VIII, p. 118.
3. *Socrate*, p. 3.

is baseness by offering to Socrates a comfortable position in he priesthood if he will but cease his attacks.

The play of Linguet not only defends the Philosophe; it assails hose who had become his worst enemies and the greatest bstacle to his success. The quarrel is no longer a Palissot uarrel, but a struggle between progressives and reactionaries. n that light, the *Socrate* of 1764 represents in the drama he final word of the Philosophe to his aggressors. Between 760 and 1764, however, other Socrates types had been esurrected or planned. In the *Procès des ariettes*, given at he Foire Saint-Laurent in 1760, there was a stanza referring o *Socrate*:[1]

Socrate malgré les huées
De tout le peuple athénien
S'est mis au-dessus des nuées
De l'Aristophane ancien.
Nous, quelques succès dont se flatte
L'auteur moderne tant hué (ou loué)[2],
Nous donnons le pas à Socrate
Sur le censeur qui l'a joué.

Diderot, too, had in mind a play on Socrate which he had ketched in the *Essai de la poésie dramatique* under the *Drame hilosophique*.[3] While it was never finished, it left no gap, he Philosophes having found more effective means of combat- ing their opponents.

What had the Encyclopedists accomplished on the stage? n comedy, where the opposing party held full sway, they iscovered early that they were handicapped. If they had been orced to carry on the fight there, they would have lost it: resenting the Philosophe as a serious character, they would ave failed to interest their public; presenting him as a comic haracter, they would have defeated their purpose. Realizing heir weakness and finding an analogous case in antiquity,

1. *Journal encyclopédique*, 1760, pp. 117-18.
2. The parenthesis occurs in the text.
3. See Diderot, *Oeuvres*, ed. Assezat, Vol. VII, p. 451.

they devoted themselves during the four years between 1760 and 1764 to fashioning their reply in tragic dress. This reply falls into three parts: Voltaire's play may be considered as a statement of the case, Sauvigny's as the defense, and Linguet's as the counter-offensive. Thereupon the Philosophes quit this field, and after 1764 proffered no further answers to hostile plays. That was due partly to their being too busy elsewhere to pay much heed to the theatre, and partly, no doubt, to their judging themselves sufficiently strong to ignore this type of attack. Since their opponents were not silenced but continued to bring out play after play, the Philosophes may be said to have fallen short of their immediate objective.

We have seen that the Philosophes never made an effective reply upon the comic stage and that their response through the medium of tragedy did not silence their opponents. Yet the closing years of the eighteenth century offer no substantial additions to the series of plays directed against the Philosophe. In 1790, Lady Craven, Margravine of Anspach, wrote and presented in the theatre at Triestorf *Le Philosophe moderne*.[1] In 1796, La Montagne published *Papelard ou le Tartuffe philosophe et politique*.[2] Some three years later,[3] there appeared at Turin *Le Bourgeois Philosophe*.[4] Finally, in the year 1800, there was printed a very curious play called *L'Anti-Phi-*

1. *Le Philosophe moderne*, comédie en trois actes, 1790. Without name of author or publisher. A copy in the British Museum, C. 38: C. 46.

2. *Papelard ou le Tartuffe philosophe et politique*, comédie en cinq actes et en vers. Par Pierre La Montagne, de Landon près Bordeaux, auteur de plusieurs poèmes dramatiques, poésies diverses, et ouvrages traduits de l'anglais. "Anch'io son pittore." A Paris. De l'imprimerie du cercle Social, Rue du Th. Fr. nº 4. L'An IV de la République. A copy in the Bib. Nat., 8 Yth 13368.

3. Bélise, in Act I, scene III, makes the statement: "Oui, en desséchant les cœurs, elle (la philosophie) seule enfanta nos dix ans de malheurs." This is a reference to the French Revolution which serves to date the play as 1799 or slightly later.

4. *Le Bourgeois Philosophe*, comédie en cinq actes en vers. Par M. D. C. [Epigraph:]

> Le Ciel dont nous voyons que l'ordre est tout puissant
> Pour différents emplois nous fabrique en naissant,

sophe.[1] None of these[2] added any new elements to the dis-
ssion; they merely served to trace the later developments of
e "Philosophe à la mode."

> Et tout esprit n'est pas composé d'une étoffe
> Qui se trouve taillée à faire un philosophe.
> Molière, *Femmes savantes*, Acte IV, scene 1.

rin, chez Bernardin Barberis Imprimeur, Rue des Imprimeurs
272. A copy in the Bibliothèque de Chambéry. See Mugnier, F.,
Théâtre en Savoie (1887), p. 186, who is inclined to attribute the
ay to M. de Costar. Costar published his *Amusements dramatiques*
etween 1767 and 1770.

1. *L'Anti-Philosophe*, comédie. An VIII (1800). Bib. Nat. Yf 4002.

2. With the exception of *L'Anti-Philosophe*, which seems to have
solutely no agreement between the title and the plot and characters
the play.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

In summing up the information gathered from a study of the fifty-one plays, we find that they are important documents in the philosophic movement in that they, offering direct opposition to its advance, trace the successive steps in that advance. We have already seen how the plays marked by their chronological grouping the growth, organization, and period of crisis in the Philosophic Party. In addition to this general confirmatory evidence of the struggle of the Philosophes with their opponents, of the growth of the party, and of the diffusion of its ideas, the plays indicate the various connotations of the term Philosophe and the indictment brought against that individual and his ideas by those who opposed the movement.

During the first half of the century, four plays contained characters to whom the term was applied: *Damocle*, *Le faux Savant*, *Le Philosophe à la mode*, and *Les Philosophes* (1742). An examination of the characters presented in these plays as Philosophes has shown that the term was then marked by a certain vagueness. Damocle was characterized as an impractical idealist, a man of letters, a misanthrope, and a political theorist; Polimatte, as a universal savant, a man of letters, a man of the world, and a pedant; Narcisse, as an egotist, a misanthrope, and a social theorist; and Etourdi, as a pedant, a shallow and inept seeker, a man of letters, and an individual who has made a fad out of a system of philosophy. There is much in common between these four characters: Damocle, Polimatte, and Etourdi are men of letters; Damocle and Narcisse are misanthropes, and both deal in theories; and Polimatte and Etourdi are pedants. All of them show some relationship with philosophers: Damocle in many respects

uggests Diogenes and the Cynics; Polimatte is a follower of Descartes and Malebranche; Narcisse possesses traits which ave been commonly attributed to Epicurus; and Etourdi is disciple of Leibnitz and Wolff. And yet it is not these relaionships with recognized philosophers which make them Phiosophes. Apparently they are called Philosophes because of characteristic attitude which they take toward knowledge, nd it is only the more or less systematized body of their ideas vhich constitutes their philosophy. All are students: Damocle, n political theory; Polimatte, in chemistry, physics, and other ranches of learning; Narcisse, in ethics; and Etourdi, in the hilosophies of Leibnitz and Wolff. But, though they sometimes possess traits in common and though they all show ome kinship with philosophers and a definite attitude toward nowledge, the defect for which they are condemned as Phiosophes varies. Damocle and Polimatte are characterized by heir pretense; Narcisse, by his advocacy of individualism; and Etourdi, by his shallowness and ineptitude. Damocle and Polimatte, pretending to know, apply a sham philosophy; Narcisse, thinking to know, applies a pernicious philosophy; Etourdi, wanting to know, applies a shallow philosophy.

These four plays, then, bring out several points as regards he connotation of the term Philosophe. There was still a ecognized relationship between philosopher and Philosophe, ut the Philosophe was more intimately connected with the ccumulation and propagation of ideas which he considered is philosophy. The nature of the ideas, his attitude toward hem, and his capacity for dealing with them were the factors which determined the differences between the Philosophes. Broadly speaking, the playwrights had already distinguished hree types: the first type is the demi-savant who pretends to know those things of which he is, in reality, ignorant; the second type is an individualist who advocates an anti-social doctrine of self-interest; and the third type is the individual who has made a hobby out of a series of ideas which he vainly endeavors to comprehend.

At the opening of the second half of the century, an attempt was made by the playwrights to apply the term Philosophe to specific contemporary individuals with the purpose of clarifying its meaning and at the same time of ridiculing the leaders of the Philosophic Party. In five plays individuals were chosen as the butt of criticism: Polimatte, Damocle, Narcisse, and Etourdi were replaced by Marivaux, Mouhi, Montesquieu, Prévost, Mainvilliers, D'Argens, Voltaire, Maupertuis, Crébillon, Rousseau, Diderot, Helvétius, Duclos, Madame Epinay, M^lle^ Clairon, Madame Geoffrin, La Harpe, Marmontel, Cadet, Thomas, Arnaud, D'Alembert, Capperonnier, Condorcet, Holbach, and Macquer. These individuals were far from possessing identical characteristics. Some were comparatively innocent of general philosophic doctrine (Marivaux, Arnaud, Crébillon, Prévost); others were connected more or less closely with the Encyclopedic Party (Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, Marmontel, D'Alembert, Diderot); others were friendly to the Encyclopedists, while attempting to retain their independence (D'Argens, Helvétius, Duclos, Epinay, Clairon, Geoffrin, La Harpe, Holbach, Condorcet); and still others were essentially scientists (Cadet, Thomas, Capperonnier, Macquer). Consequently the confusion which the playwrights had attempted to eliminate became more marked than ever. A Philosophe now might be any person allied to or in sympathy with the *Encyclopédie*, or a savant interested in any branch of science, or merely a man of letters.

The public, influenced by the attitude of D'Alembert and others, did not react favorably to this direct personal satire, so the playwrights altered their procedure and in the period following 1760 substituted for D'Alembert and his twenty-five contemporaries the following stage characters: (1) Damon, D'Alvalence, Valère, Toupet, as types of the leaders of the Philosophic Party;[1] (2) Sapin, Durchêne, Fagot, La Baronne, as types of a second hierarchy of Philosophes following the

1. See *supra*, pp. 68-69.

lead of the first group either through love of power or of gain;[1] (3) a whole series of "valets" who imitated their masters through ignorance or cupidity.[2] These Philosophes are descendants of Narcisse in *Le Philosophe à la mode*. Like him, they are egotists seeking in everything personal advantage; like him, they are theorists advocating an anti-social doctrine of self-interest; like him, the assert a dangerous individualism. On the other hand, the show a close connection with certain contemporary doctrines, particularly with the doctrine of self-interest of Helvétius, and also with Rousseau's doctrine of equality and the social and political theories of the *Encyclopédie*. The have extracted from these doctrines certain specific catch-phrases which they advocate and propagate and they are at the same time endeavoring to make converts to a definitely organized party. This party has grown until it includes Philosophes from all castes of the social order; the noble or the man of the people, the wealthy or the indigent, the intelligent or the ignorant, those with a definite system of philosophy or those with a few ideas of political or ethical nature. But irrespective of his close or distant connection with specific contemporary doctrines, irrespective also of his social caste, the "Philosophe à la mode," representative of a party, was still, like his prototype of the first half of the century, distinguished by the advocacy of the doctrine of personal interest, by the assertion of individualism, and by the tendency to theorize.

During the same period, another group of playwrights called attention to the existence of a Philosophe whom they denominated the "Soit-disant Philosophe." He is a descendant of Polimatte in *Le faux Savant* and of Damocle in the play which bears his name. Like Polimatte, he is a sham savant, a man of letters, a man of the world, and a pedant. Like Damocle, he lays claim to virtues of the real philosopher, feigning to

1. See *supra*, p. 69.
2. See *supra*, pp. 70 ff.

be deeply interested in questions of good and evil, professing faith in the intelligence, and pretending to be free from prejudice. Like both Polimatte and Damocle he is a misanthrope. As was the case with Polimatte and Damocle, his outstanding defect is his pretense. On the other hand, he now shows a decided relationship with contemporary Philosophes such as Rousseau and Helvétius, and in many respects a close alliance with the theories and doctrines of the "Philosophe à la mode." The term "Soi-disant Philosophe" was applied by members of the Philosophic Party to a large group of unapproved imitators; by their opponents, members of the Philosophic Party were so termed; and the public so designated any one who showed philosophic pretense.

Certain plays belonging to this epoch presented a type of Philosophe distinct from the "Philosophe à la mode" and the "Soi-disant Philosophe." Cassandre of *Le Philosophe imaginaire*, Siphon of *La Physicienne* and Sastrée of *La Philosomanie* are examples of this type. They are all descendants of Etourdi in *Les Philosophes* (1742). Like him, they are pedants, men of letters, and shallow and inept seekers who have chosen some field of knowledge as a hobby. They also resemble Polimatte in that they are students in varied branches of learning rather than in the restricted field of philosophy as was the case with Etourdi. Still they are not presented as pretending savants as was Polimatte; they are rather would-be savants as was Etourdi. Their outstanding defects are shallowness and ineptitude, and by these two defects they are differenciated both from the "Philosophe à la mode" characterized by his advocacy of individualism, and from the "Soi-disant Philosophe" characterized by his pretense.

Thus the plays after 1760 distinguished, as did the plays of the first half of the century, three types of Philosophes, the first type a pretender, the second, an advocate of individualism, the third a shallow, though indefatigable, pedant. There was, therefore, a real correspondance between the first and the last half of the century, and Narcisse had Damon, D'Al-

valence, Valère, and Toupet as his descendants; Polimatte and Damocle had Ariste; and Etourdi had Sastrée, Siphon, and Cassandre. But the outstanding type during the latter part of the century is the "Philosophe à la mode," for he is intimately connected with the doctrines evolving from the encyclopedic movement. He is accordingly portrayed as the Philosophe and the other two types become "sous-philosophes."

What, then, is a Philosophe? At various periods throughout the century, he is partially identified with philosopher or savant or man of letters; with Encyclopedist or ally of the Encyclopedist; with scholar or amateur scientist; or with him who aspires to imitate any of the foregoing types. But whether philosopher, savant, man of letters, patron of the *Encyclopédie*, contributor to the *Encyclopédie*, or scientist, he at all times possesses, examines, and propagates new ideas which are a menace to society either because they are too shallow to be of value, too fantastic to be practical, or too advanced to be acceptable.

In addition to the evidence they furnish concerning the personality of the Philosophe, the plays are important documents in the contest between the Philosophe and his opponents. As we have already shown in Chapter I,[1] the primary purpose of these plays was not to depict the Philosophe. They are essentially works of propaganda written to combat a group, and the indictment they bring against the Philosophe consists of the following counts: (1) He possesses ideas of a social, political, and religious nature which are "advanced" and hence deleterious to the general welfare. Those which deal with problems of social ethics and governmental reform are regarded as the most reprehensible, while those which deal with metaphysics and religion receive in the plays scant attention and seem to awaken little interest. (2) He has organized a group for the purpose of propagating his ideas — a group bigoted, intolerant, and composed of individuals who are notoriously

1. See *supra*, p. 6.

incompetent to deal with intellectual subjects. (3) If his incompetence might be condoned, his pretense, his hypocrisy, and his avowed insincerity cannot be disregarded. (4) With a fixed program of propaganda and a keen desire to enlist supporters, he preaches a doctrine of self-interest appealing to what is basest in human nature. As a consequence, his influence has extended to include alike the highest and the lowest classes. The conversion of the "valet" class to his ideas is particularly alarming, since the acceptance by the lower classes of the moral code is what assures its maintenance, and it is conceivable that their rejection of the ordinary principles of morality will entail a revolution in social organization. This to the conservatives was a consumation much to be dreaded, and that their fears were not idle is plain from later developments. For them a "horrible example" of this type of valet Philosophe is shortly thereafter shown by Beaumarchais. Figaro is the glorified successor of the valet Frontin leavened with Helvétius' theory of self-interest. (5) Lastly, the Philosophe encourages fads which are not only ridiculous but dangerous. Anglomania threatens patriotism; the formation of "bureaux d'esprit" builds up a compact philosophic organization which promotes intolerance ; the desire for writing cheapens real knowledge and spreads false doctrines.

The charges of the opposition are brought with such unanimity that the question arises whether there was an organized group of opponents corresponding to the conscious grouping of the Philosophic Party. So far as concerns the authors of the plays we have discussed, they cannot be said to have formed a definitely organized group, or definitely organized groups, but there are among them certain more or less definite filiations. Palissot is directly responsible for four of the plays. Poinsinet de Sivry, author of *Les Philosophes de bois*, was Palissot's brother-in-law, and Poinsinet, author of *Le petit Philosophe*, was a cousin of Poinsinet de Sivry, so

1. The valet hero of Le Sage's *Turcaret*.

that Palissot may have had some connection with these two plays. It was also claimed that Palissot collaborated with Bièvre in *Le Séducteur*. While this has not been established, Palissot knew Bièvre and encouraged the production of his play. Bièvre was acquainted with Lady Craven, author of *Le Philosophe moderne*, with whom he collaborated at times, although in this play there is no evidence of collaboration. Finally, Lady Craven knew Madame de Genlis, who was destined to carry on the fight against the Philosophe in the opening years of the nineteenth century. Thus Palissot may have directly or indirectly been the source of inspiration of Poinsinet, Poinsinet de Sivry, Bièvre, Lady Craven and Madame de Genlis, but at best the relation does not appear to be particularly close. We might anticipate some correlation of effort among the Jesuit dramatists. Lejay and Porée at times worked together. Buffier, we have seen, translated Lejay's play into French. Ducerceau's *Philosophe à la mode* was lauded by Buchet in the *Mercure* and later an episode of the play was taken to form the main plot of Radonvilliers' *Crispin Philosophe*. But if there was any organization here, it had spent its strength before 1760.

It is not within the scope of this work to determine the truth of the charges nor the sincerity of those making them. While the indictment may well be grossly exaggerated by reason of party bitterness or simply for the heightening of dramatic effect, the views expressed in these plays represent those of a considerable group and so must be taken into consideration in estimating the position occupied by the Philosophe in the eyes of the eighteenth-century public.

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